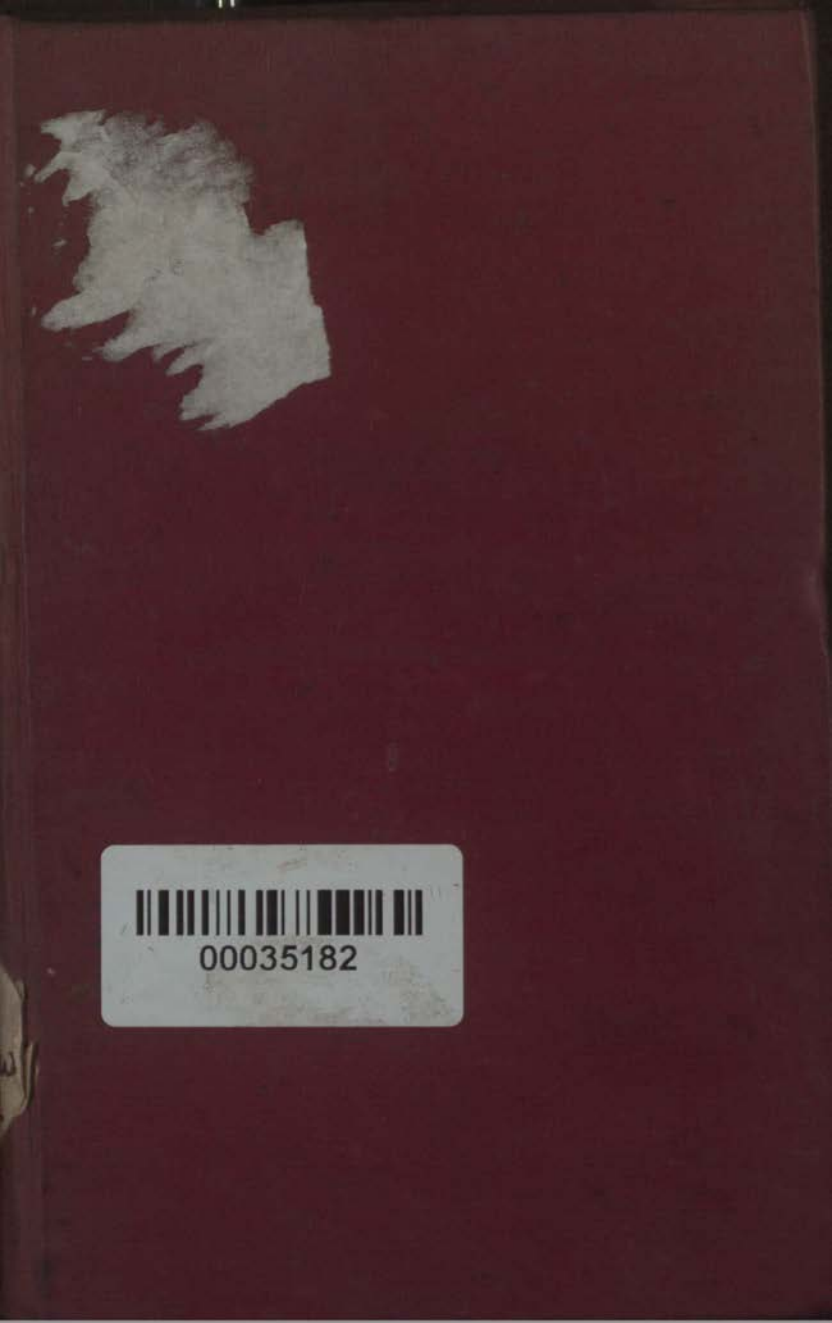
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"DAILY TELEGRAPH" WAR BOOKS

No. 1

HOW THE WAR BEGAN

HOW THE WAR BEGAN

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BY

J. M. KENNEDY

With an Introduction by W. L. COURTNEY, LL.D.

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CAUSES OF THE GREAT EUROPEAN WAR

Introductory Chapter

In studying great historical movements and revolutions, there is no truer principle than that wars, though they may arise from small and insignificant conditions, are concerned with large issues. There could be no more striking exemplification of this truth than the present European war, which, as everyone knows, began with an ultimatum addressed by Austria-Hungary to Servia in consequence of the murder of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand at Serajevo. If we like to phrase it so, we may say that the war took its rise from the murder of an Archduke, and the indignation of the Austrian Government with Belgrade, where, it maintained, the plot was in reality hatched. These were, indeed, the antecedent conditions of warfare, but they do not explain how from a purely local quarrel the world saw with astonishment the whole Continent embroiled, with every plain resounding to the tramp of armed men. Moreover, the average man of intelligence, who reads his daily newspaper with care, is apt to be so distracted with the series of telegrams constantly put before him, that he cannot see the wood for the trees. A great number of people are asking themselves

why Europe is at the present moment convulsed with war, and especially why we are dragged into the quarrel. If the man in the street merely refers back to alleged causes, to which we have already referred, his confusion only grows the greater. He readily understands that often, in the course of history, mountains are in labour, and, as the Roman poet said, only "a ridiculous mouse" is born. The contrary proposition is more difficult to understand—how an event occurring in Bosnia, even though it should be the murder of an Archduke, should put so many towering mountain ranges in labour. The first thing then that any student of contemporary events has to seek to comprehend is the wide scope of those underlying movements in Europe, which have at last come into such blazing prominence in the European war of 1914.

Splendid Isolation and Its Results

We must take up the history a little way back, and first of all consider some of the transmutations in English diplomacy. Most people are aware that the main policy of Lord Salisbury, as Foreign Minister of Great Britain, was one of non-intervention in Continental disputes, and of what has sometimes been termed "splendid isolation." The theory in this case was that, owing to her geographical position as an island, England could afford to stand aloof and pursue her own aims as an Imperial Power, undisturbed by wars and rumours of wars in the rest of the

world. A policy of splendid isolation could, indeed, be excellently carried out, if two antecedent conditions could be granted. The first is that we had such an undisputed mastery of the sea that the various links between the Motherland and her Dominions and dependencies could be easily safeguarded. The second condition is that we possessed a real army, whether based or not on conscription, comparable with that of European Powers. In other words Great Britain could sit still as complete mistress of her own house, if her Empire was safe abroad and her army made her secure at home. Unfortunately, neither of these conditions has been, or could be, realised. The steady growth of the German fleet, for instance, proved that Berlin also had pretensions to be a world-power, together with the corollary that the building of German ships formed a direct attack on British maritime supremacy. Then, suddenly, we discovered in the Boer War that it might easily happen during a European conflagration that most of the Powers of Europe were ranged against us, and that if, for whatever reason, our little army were engaged elsewhere, British isolation was not a source of strength but one of pre-eminent danger. Hence arose the change of policy which we generally associate with the name of King Edward VII., but which was, of course, in reality the policy of Lord Lansdowne. From this point of view Great Britain, sorrowfully recognising that Germany was a determined and persistent

enemy, sought for alliances which might help her in the case of an eventual struggle.

Birth of the Entente

King Edward's tact and *savoir-faire* enabled him to serve as an admirable, though unofficial, envoy of his country's change of view. His successive visits to foreign capitals, especially those to Paris, and the interview with the Czar of Russia at Reval, laid the foundations for what afterwards blossomed into the Triple Entente. Almost by a miracle a complete change took place in the relations between Paris and London. Hitherto they had been, for all practical purposes, enemies in Europe, Africa, and in the New World. The date is, roughly speaking, 1903: the chief names on both sides for a better understanding are M. Delcassé, M. Paul Cambon, Lord Lansdowne, Sir Edward Grey, and Edward VII. An arbitration treaty inevitably led to a more complete understanding between the two nations. France in her turn brought Russia on the field, and although the unfortunate affair on the Dogger Bank, when the Russian Navy, under the influence of a mistake, fired at innocent English fishermen believing them to be Japanese, for the moment endangered the chances of a *rapprochement*, Lord Lansdowne was able to carry out his original designs of amity with Russia, and as we have already seen, Edward VII. met the Czar of all the Russias at Reval in June, 1908. At this time the precise bearing of the treaties between the

three nations was not very clearly understood. There was, of course, no idea of an offensive and defensive treaty between France and England, still less between England and Russia. But it was taken for granted that the three nations were to pursue a more or less identical foreign policy, and as a matter of fact during some of the Conferences over the Moroccan difficulty, England was able to give material help to her friend France, in opposition to the wishes of Germany.

Germany Encircled

If we ask what was the general effect of this diplomatic arrangement, initiated by Lord Lansdowne and carried out by Sir Edward Grey, the answer is clear. Its immediate object was to encircle the German Empire with a chain of more or less allied countries, in order that her pretensions to be lord of Central Europe might be less perilous to Europe. Berlin statesmen quickly recognised how much was involved in these Ententes Cordiales. They realised that they were aimed at them, and at the restriction of their ambitious policy. Naturally, therefore, Germany was careful to clasp in still closer bonds to herself the other great Teutonic Power—Austria-Hungary; while Italy, which was the third member of the Triple Alliance, was forced to throw in her lot—somewhat unwillingly as we have since discovered—with that of the Central European Powers. As a matter of fact, no love was lost between Italy and Austria either then or in the subsequent period.

But it suited Rome to join hands with Vienna in order that she might still hold her own in the Adriatic, while, owing to a series of diplomatic blunders, she was induced to regard France as her bitter enemy.

Germany's Aggressive Policy

Rapidly Germany gave the world to understand that she was going to do all that lay in her power to consolidate and strengthen her own hegemony. Three successive opportunities presented themselves, of each of which Germany made instant use. The first occurred in Morocco. In 1905 the German Government complained that they had been ignored in an Anglo-French arrangement, whereby France was allowed a free hand in Morocco, while England was left to develop her own policy without external interference in Egypt. On March 31st, 1905, the German Emperor landed at Tangier in order to aid the Sultan of Morocco in his demand for a Conference of the Powers to check the military dispositions of France. M. Delcassé, France's Foreign Minister, demurred to this proposal, asserting that a Conference was wholly unnecessary. Thereupon Prince Bülow used menacing language, and Delcassé resigned in June, 1905. This was, undoubtedly, a diplomatic victory for Germany. It was, however, hardly sustained in subsequent negotiations. The Conference of Algeciras was held in January, 1906, and although Austria proved "a brilliant second" to Germany, the British delegates stoutly

supported France. The conclusion of the Act of Algeciras on April 7th, practically confirmed France in her right to deal with Morocco partly by armed force and partly by " peaceful penetration."

• The second opportunity for Germany, of which she made brilliant use, took place in 1908. Austria, in pursuit of her undeviating policy to spread herself in the Near East, proclaimed through the mouth of Count Aerenthal that she was about to annex Bosnia and Herzegovina. Russia immediately protested, and so did most of the other great Powers. But Germany at once took up the Austrian cause. In the picturesque language of the Kaiser, Germany was prepared to stand " in shining armour " side by side with her ally, and inasmuch as Russia was in 1908 only just recovering from the effects of her disastrous war with Japan, and was in no condition to take the offensive, the Triple Alliance gained a distinct victory. Then came the third opportunity for Germany, in 1911, once more in Morocco. It was asserted that the French military occupation of Morocco formed what was to all intents and purposes a new situation, and Germany complained that without some sort of compensation she was unable to tolerate the existing posture of affairs. In July, 1911, the world was startled by the news that the German gunboat *Panther*, joined shortly afterwards by the cruiser *Berlin*, had been sent to the closed fort of Agadir, near the mouth of the Sus River. Clearly Berlin

intended to reopen the whole Moroccan question, and the tension between the Powers was for some time acute. Mr. Lloyd George, after consultation with Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey, made a speech on July 21st, at the Mansion House, which considerably fluttered the Continental dovecots. By degrees, however, the angry feelings were appeased, and the immediate problem was solved by two Franco-German treaties, concluded on November 4th, one recognising a French protectorate over Morocco, the other providing for the cession by France of about one hundred thousand square miles of territory in the Congo basin. German colonial policy is well worthy of study at this period, especially in regard to Africa, but as it stands a little outside the main course of European events it may, for our immediate purpose, be dismissed.

A More Peaceful Outlook

For the moment in Europe matters looked more peaceful. Germany had indeed asserted herself with no little provocation, but she had secured a large slice of the Congo, for the entire possession of which, both at this period and subsequently, she was without doubt intriguing. France had gained a free hand in Morocco at a price which her statesmen considered well worth paying. Great Britain had shown her determination to uphold the Anglo-French Entente at all costs. The two great confederacies of Europe—Germany, Austria and Italy, as against Great Britain,

France and Russia—confronted each other as necessary elements in accordance with the old diplomatic doctrine of the Balance of Power. And, as if to confirm the existing state of things, when the German and Russian Emperors had a meeting in July, 1912, at Port Baltic, an official *communiqué* was issued that "there could be no question of producing alterations in the groupings of the European Powers, the value of which for the maintenance of equilibrium and of peace has already been proved."

Italian War

Nevertheless, those best acquainted with Foreign Affairs were not deceived by the external signs of calm. In November, 1911, war had broken out between Italy and Turkey with regard to Tripoli. It was a one-sided war, which resulted in the Italian annexation of Tripoli and Cyrenaica. Its result, so far as the third member of the Triple Alliance was concerned, was to add to her strength as a factor in international politics. But the precise reason which led her to take up arms still remains somewhat obscure. It may have been due to a certain jealousy of France and French successes in Morocco, but it is not altogether an extravagant assumption that Italy's action was forced upon her by the course of some Franco-German negotiations. It was not obscurely hinted at the time that as compensation for the French annexation of Morocco, Germany, with the consent of Turkey, was anxious to extend

her influence along the North African coast, and had her eye on Tripoli as a Mediterranean *point d'appui*. Whether this was so we cannot of course state with any certainty, but it assuredly coincides with the many other evidences of the Teutonic desire to have a larger "place in the sun" than was permitted by existing international arrangements.

Balkan Wars

More important in its influence on succeeding events was the outbreak of the Balkan War in the autumn months of 1912. It began in the usual way by a demand on Turkey for the execution of some long-promised and long-delayed reforms in Macedonia. But the new feature of the never-ending Near Eastern question was the formation of a Balkan League, combining the forces of Bulgaria, Servia, Montenegro and Greece for aggressive purposes against Constantinople. The crisis reached an acute stage in October. Montenegro declared war and invaded Albania. On October 13th Greece, Bulgaria and Servia presented their ultimatum; on the 17th war between the Allies and Turkey had commenced. The successive incidents are probably too fresh in the minds of readers to necessitate any description in detail. The main facts are clear. Bulgaria, by a series of startling successes, drove the Turkish troops to the lines of Chatalja, and Servia was equally successful in her sphere of operations. Greece did wonders, with an army in which

hitherto no European observer had placed any confidence. Then came the Conference initiated by Sir Edward Grey, and London became the scene of the meeting of the peace delegates and the Ambassadors of the Powers. In its immediate results the Conference proved abortive. To the first Balkan War succeeded a second, in which Bulgaria, to the surprise alike of her friends and foes, savagely turned on her quondam allies, Servia and Greece, and the Turks probably to their astonishment found it easy to reinstate themselves at Adrianople. The humiliation of Bulgaria and the intrusion of Roumania on the scene, followed. The agreement eventually concluded at Bucharest satisfied hardly any party in the controversy, and was considered on all hands to be merely a temporary expedient.

What, however, is more important for us to consider than the two Balkan Wars, is the influence which these events had on Germany and Austria. Germany, as we have seen, had been for some years chafing under the supposed restrictions of the Triple Entente, and was anxious to extend herself in every direction. Austria had a long-standing hostility with the Servians and Montenegrins, because in her eyes the Slavonic people, championed as they were by Russia, offered a perpetual bar to her development eastwards. Inasmuch as both the two great Teutonic Kingdoms felt that "drag towards the East" which many historians have noted, they were both not a little perplexed, and possibly even discouraged.

by the results of the Balkan Wars. There can be no question that Germany expected Turkey to win against the Balkan League. Turkey was her friend, the Turkish Army had been disciplined by German instructors, and the influence of Berlin as worked by Baron Marschall von Bieberstein was paramount in Constantinople. From her friend Turkey, Germany could get all the concessions she required, but it was a wholly different matter when Turkey was defeated in the field and lost large tracts of country in Macedonia and Thrace. Austria had to curb her desires. She wanted to claim the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar: above all it was her ambition to get to Salonika. And the enemies who had prevented the realisation of her wishes were Servia, and her protector, Russia. Probably from this time onwards Austria waited for an opportunity to avenge herself on Servia, while Germany, in close union with her ally, began to study the situation in relation to the great Northern Empire in an eminently bellicose spirit.

Murder of the Archduke

We have now brought matters up to the verge of that great crisis which has produced such alarming and such disastrous results. We have seen the successive steps by which the policy of the statesmen at Berlin hoped to aggrandise Germany at the expense of her neighbours. Throughout the whole of this period it would not be an exaggeration to say that Germany was nursing a

sullen hostility against all the members of the Triple Entente, watching for an opportunity to get the better of them and to extend herself, not only in Europe eastwards, but especially in her nascent colonial Empire. On a state of such uneasy equilibrium the murder of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand came as a bolt from a blue sky. It gave Austria exactly the opportunity for which she had been looking. It was in itself a hateful outrage, with regard to which most nations would entirely sympathise with the feelings of the aged Emperor Francis Joseph. It was, apparently, the work of Servian emissaries—that is to say, it was engineered by precisely those people whom Austria had long desired to humble. Hence, in July of the present year, the Austrians delivered an ultimatum at Belgrade in such drastic and uncompromising terms that it was felt at once that she had long since decided on a policy of war.

Critical Days

We now approach a period fresh within the recollection of us all, but in which there still exists acute controversy both as to the motives of the actors and the character of their action. Naturally enough, recent diplomatic history is the most difficult of all to disentangle, because we receive a variety of impressions from different and inconsistent statements, and as a rule lack the key to unlock the entanglements. Let us proceed step by step. In July Austria sent an ultimatum to Servia asking for a humiliating

surrender and full acknowledgment of guilt as regards the murder of the Archduke. Humiliating as these terms were, with two small exceptions they were accepted by Servia, and even in the two items in which she could not give immediate compliance, Servia professed her willingness to submit to arbitration. Immediately on receipt of the Servian Note, Austria declared that it was unsatisfactory, and at once proceeded with her preparations for war. Then came a confused and anxious time when Sir Edward Grey made his proposals for a Conference of the four Powers not immediately connected with the controversy—France, Germany, Italy and Great Britain. Berlin demurred under the plea that this was not the right form of procedure, and that Austria could not be dragged before the tribunal of Europe as though she counted for no more than a Balkan State. Conversations, however, still continued between the different capitals, and more especially between St. Petersburg and Vienna. King George V. wrote autograph letters both to the Czar and to the Kaiser, and it was clear that England was making desperate attempts to preserve the peace. Then came the news of the Russian mobilisation, or rather partial mobilisation. Germany at once, in menacing tones, asked the meaning of this mobilisation, and as no satisfactory answer was forthcoming, declared war. France was in turn asked what steps she proposed to take in the conjuncture, and as she was bound to side with her partner Russia, the German Ambassa-

dor was withdrawn from Paris and the French Ambassador left Berlin.

The Kaiser as War-Maker

We must stop for a moment here, in order to understand how a cloud no bigger than a man's hand could so suddenly overspread the whole European horizon. Austrian policy at all events is perfectly clear. She had but one idea, at all events to start with—the humiliation of Servia; that is to say, either the weakening of the Slav Kingdom, so that it would have for the future to depend on Vienna instead of St. Petersburg, or else absolute conquest. This was entirely consistent with the earlier steps she had taken at the end of the Balkan War. Likely enough, she or Germany had urged Bulgaria to her sudden attack on Servia and Greece: at all events she had steadily refused to allow Servia to have any port on the Adriatic, and her only object in the creation of an autonomous state of Albania was to limit and circumscribe Servian dominion. If we were able to consider Austrian action as isolated from that of Germany, we could readily comprehend her motives and her action. She had an obvious outrage to avenge, and every nation in Europe had to admit that Servia had to be punished. Unfortunately, we cannot dissociate Austrian policy from that of Germany. There is very good ground for supposing that the Austrian ultimatum was part and parcel of a great aggressive movement of Germany, who, for reasons which we will

presently consider, thought the opportunity ripe for the execution of long-devised projects. The ultimatum, it is said, was not shown to the German Government before it was launched at Servia. But its terms were known to the German Emperor. He was shown the document; he probably modified some of its terms. Otherwise, his hasty action towards Russia, his prompt determination to burn all his boats and commence his campaign, are hardly explicable.

Reasons for War

If for years Germany has been preparing for a European war, as now, unfortunately, only seems too probable,* the suitability of the present moment for its declaration is accounted for quite satisfactorily. Why did the German Emperor think the moment ripe for unloosing his battalions? There were several reasons. In the first place, he did not consider that Russia was ready for war. At all events he felt pretty certain that the mobilisation of the entire Russian Army would at least take three or four weeks. In the next place France, in the throes of a Caillaux intrigue, seemed no more ready for hostilities than Russia. Moreover, certain revelations had been made public about the condition of the French military resources, which seemed to

* Austrian reservists were warned in South Africa a month before the commencement of war — a sufficiently damning proof of the German intentions. The following cablegram was published by the *Daily Telegraph* on July 30th, 1914:—"Austrian Reserve Order.—Printed a month ago.—From our own Correspondent.—Johannesburg, Wednesday

prove that she was not wholly prepared. In the third place, and perhaps that was the most decisive factor, the Kaiser was led to believe that England was rent with factions, that she was on the eve of a civil war in Ireland, and that her action in the event of a European war could be easily discounted. Nothing seems clearer than the fact that Berlin had made up its mind that Great Britain would remain neutral. She might talk big, but she would do nothing. Probably it came as a most painful surprise for German statesmen to discover that the European peril at once caused all Englishmen to lay aside domestic broils and face whatever was in store as an united nation. It was so obviously to the advantage of Germany that England should remain neutral that we can scarcely conceive even an excitable despot like the Kaiser venturing on hostilities if he had to meet not only Russia in the East and France in the west, but also a superior British force on the sea. This contention is borne out by the " infamous " proposals—as Mr. Asquith rightly stigmatised them—which were made to Great Britain on the very eve of hostilities. Sir Edward Grey had naturally asked both France and Germany, now that it seemed the die had been cast and a war was imminent, what line of conduct they would respectively pursue in reference to the neutrality of Belgium.

(5.35 p m.)--A facsimile of the Austrian notice calling up the reservists abroad is published in the *Johannesburg Leader* to-day. The imprint shows it was issued in German and Magyar from the State printing works at Vienna, and [therefore must be a month old."

This neutrality, as is well known, was guaranteed in 1839 by most of the European Powers, including Germany, or rather Prussia. The French answer was frank and straightforward. France had no intention of departing from her engagements. But the German answer was tortuous and Machiavellian. If we would stand apart from the quarrel, Germany promised, not only to give compensation to Belgium for the infraction of neutrality, but to restore her independence at the conclusion of the war. Naturally the British Government tore asunder these flimsy pretences.

"Infamous" Proposals

There seems to have been also another offer made to Great Britain still more despicable. We were told that if we consented to remain inactive, Germany would exact no territory from France as a result of victory. What was not explicitly stated, but which seems absolutely true, was that Germany had offered a bribe to Italy if she would only join the German cause, in the shape of Nice and Savoy. We were told that France might possibly lose some of her colonies. What we were not told was that a portion of her territory should be given over to Italy. Such a proposition seems almost incredible. Nevertheless, there exist good grounds for believing that it was actually made. At the very time when Prince Lichnowsky, the German Ambassador in London, was speaking smooth things, during the very

period in which Germany was loudly protesting her desire for peace and her unwilling participation in the conflict forced upon her, the invasion of Belgium had been carefully designed and suggestions were made as to how France would be dealt with if she were conquered. Probably Prince Lichnowsky himself acted in perfect good faith. He said that no German soldier had crossed the frontier into France, although it was known that Germans had, as a matter of fact, crossed near Longwy. But in all probability he was kept in ignorance of the secret German designs in order that, according to the famous *rôle* attributed to Ambassadors, he might "lie" the more successfully on behalf of his country. As to the German Chancellor, he unblushingly preached the gospel of naked force and brutality. Luxemburg and Belgium—both countries protected by treaties—had been entered by German troops, and yet this is what Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg offered as an excuse in a speech in the Reichstag on August 4th: "Gentlemen, we are now in a state of necessity, and necessity knows no law. Our troops have occupied Luxemburg, and perhaps they are already on Belgian soil. Gentlemen, that is contrary to the dictates of International Law. . . . The wrong—I speak openly—that we are committing we will endeavour to make good as soon as our military goal has been reached. Anybody who is threatened as we are threatened, and is fighting for his highest possessions, can have only one thought—

how to hack his way through." A more cynical declaration has never been publicly uttered. The German Chancellor has earned the proud distinction of adopting a Machiavellian policy in exactly the same spirit as his master, the German Kaiser. The world can draw its own conclusions as to who is the breaker of European peace. Great Britain, at all events, fights in a just cause, side by side with the French and the Russians.

Declaration of War

Few words need be added as to the present position. On Bank Holiday, August 3rd, Sir Edward Grey, in a cold, impassive, but singularly powerful speech, explained the reasons why it was incumbent on this country to help France against German aggression. Both on moral, political, and diplomatic grounds, it was Great Britain's duty to fight for the liberty and independence of smaller States, to resist the infraction of ancient treaties, and to throw the whole weight of our influence and power on the side of the Triple Entente. The next day, August 4th, the Prime Minister delivered one of his ablest speeches in the House, while Mr. John Redmond, on behalf of his countrymen, eloquently vindicated Ireland's unswerving patriotism to England in the European crisis. War was declared against Germany the same night. Some days afterwards, on August 12th, it was found necessary to declare war equally against Austria-Hungary, because she had sent her troops to help the Germans in the

field, especially in the region of Alsace. A British Expeditionary Force is now operating side by side with the Belgians and the French in the neighbourhood of Namur.

Some Conclusions

It may be convenient to sum up the contentions of the preceding pages. It has been shown that the real causes of the present conflagration have been working for a long time past, and that although it is superficially true that Austria began the trouble by her declaration of hostilities against Servia, a close examination of antecedent events will prove that the real cause of the great European war is the ambition of Germany. Germany, and more especially the German Emperor—for we entirely refuse to believe that the German people as a whole desire war—have been for years past adopting a policy which though pursued in secret has been undeniably aggressive. What France was in the middle of the nineteenth century during the Third Empire, Germany has been through all the opening years of the twentieth century—a disturber of European peace, constantly fomenting quarrels, pushing her ambitions in every way, east and west, and perpetually trying to augment her Colonial Empire. That she has been preparing for the great war is no longer a matter of controversy. The German Emperor has tried to be in a literal sense the war lord of Europe, both by land and sea. To destroy this imperious and

baleful hegemony, to give some breathing space for nations whose only aim is to be pacific, to protect the principle of nationality, especially in the case of the smaller kingdoms everywhere menaced by German arms, are the objects for which the members of the Triple Entente have taken up arms. It is a war not only against dynastic ambition, but against all those forces of a soulless materialism which sap the very foundations of civilisation and culture.

W. L. COURTNEY.

1914.

NOTE:

In reference to the exact obligations incurred in accordance with the Entente between Great Britain and France—about which there has always existed some doubt in the mind of the general public—certain points have now been made clear. A letter from Sir Edward Grey to M. Cambon dated November 22nd, 1912 (printed textually on p. 119), states quite explicitly the nature of the agreement arrived at. French and British naval and military experts are to consult together, without any restriction of freedom of action on the one side or the other. Consultation between experts does not necessarily involve any joint action of the respective Governments. But if either of the countries has grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third power, then an immediate consultation has to take place, together with a discussion of measures to be

taken in common. If these measures necessitate action the two Governments will, of course, have to decide what precise effect they were prepared to give to the plans of the General Staffs.

In conformity with this general undertaking, explained by Sir Edward Grey and confirmed by M. Paul Cambon, is the official announcement of the position of the British Government published on August 2nd. The French Government has never, directly or indirectly—so the announcement ran—been led to believe that Great Britain was pledged to any particular method of discharging her obligations to France, although she will remain strictly loyal to the spirit and letter of the understanding. It was added on the same date (August 2nd) that His Majesty's Government have not decided if they will interfere, and if so, when they will interfere in the European War which has now broken out. They have always reserved to themselves the right of determining how Great Britain shall play her part in the Triple Entente.

CHAPTER I

AUSTRIA AND SERVIA—MURDER OF THE ARCHDUKE —VIENNA GOVERNMENT'S DEMANDS

THE deeper causes which led to the outbreak of a European war have already been dealt with in the Introduction to this book. The immediate excuse for the outbreak was found in the assassination of the heir-presumptive to the Austro-Hungarian throne, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and his consort, the Duchess of Hohenberg, at the Bosnian capital of Serajevo on Sunday, June 28th, 1914, and the consequent strained relations between the Austrian and Servian Governments. Ever since the conclusion of the Balkan campaign, when the influence of Austria-Hungary prevented Servia from obtaining her desired naval port on the Adriatic, Pan-Servian propaganda had admittedly been carried on in Bosnia, Herzegovina, and the Slav districts of Southern Hungary, where the people were believed to be favourable to the Greater Servian Movement. It had for years been the hope of the extreme school of Servian patriots that the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina—nominally Turkish, but administered by Austrian officials since 1878 —would one day form part of "Greater Servia"; for the Serb element predominated in their population.

This hope was shattered by the formal annexation of the two provinces in question by Austria after the Turkish revolution, an act which the Servians, rightly or wrongly, attributed to the influence of the murdered Archduke. For this reason the Austrian Government appeared to be inclined to hold the Servian Government responsible for the propaganda which had led to so much unrest in the annexed provinces. That at least a few people in the Servian capital were not unaware of the existence of agitators in their midst was made clear from an official publication in Vienna to the effect that both assassins had confessed that they stayed in Belgrade for a long time, and obtained bombs there for the express purpose of attempting the life of the Archduke.

The two murderers, both of them young men, were closely questioned by the police, members of the detective service from Vienna taking part in the inquiries on the spot, and new compromising material, affording indications of a widespread Serb conspiracy, was forthcoming. A bomb was found in the house of a Serb which resembled that hurled at the car of the Archduke by the assassin Cabrinovic. Four loaded revolvers were found at the house of a jeweller named Mitricevic, and he was arrested. In many Servian houses a large number of revolvers was discovered. The details of the examination of the accused were not divulged to the public, but the *Reichspost* asserted that it had authentic information of a connection between the Servian conspiracy in Serajevo and "Big Servian" circles in Belgrade. The Imperial *Wiener Zeitung* published some statements on

the result of the investigation, and these caused the greatest sensation. The official organ declared that the bomb which Cabrinovic confessed he received in Belgrade, was given to him for the express purpose of killing the Archduke. The murderer Princip also confessed that he spent a long time in Belgrade, and returned to Serajevo with the intention of killing the Archduke, "to save the Servian nation from oppression." The paper concluded with an assurance that the attempt was to be attributed to the agitation against Austria-Hungary among the Servian youth in Austria-Hungary, which agitation originated abroad.

News received from Bosnia at the same time showed that the excitement of the population there against their Servian co-citizens was growing in a dangerous manner. Serajevo looked like the scene of a pogrom. There was no Servian house that was not entirely demolished. A man who was carrying a portrait of the Emperor in front of a band of demonstrators was shot. From Mostar, the capital of Herzegovina, alarming incidents were reported, and it was asserted that the Servian quarter there was set fire to and many houses were burnt down. The *Pesti Hirlap* declared that in Mostar a great disturbance was taking place, and that horrible excesses had been committed against the Serbs. At other places in Bosnia and Herzegovina sanguinary conflicts occurred between the Croats and Serbs. In some towns it was said that there had been massacres of Serbs, and the reports added that martial law would shortly be proclaimed

throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. In Agram, the capital of Croatia, 20,000 men marched in procession, shouting "Down with the Serbs!" "Down with the murderers!" as they went through the streets, and demolished a house belonging to the Servian church community.

Although the loyal population of Bosnia was highly incensed against the Servian population, it was not apparently believed at first that the assassination would necessarily lead to an armed conflict.

The position taken up by the Austrian Press with regard to the revelations from Serajevo on the plot was quiet and measured. It was felt almost without exception that those opinions were discredited, for instance, that considered that the murder of the Archduke might be the excuse for new serious political complications, or even for war with Servia. The *Neue Freie Presse* wrote:

Serajevo is doubtless the seat of a conspiracy, and the successful assassins came from Belgrade. The chief interests of the State demand that clearness as to the originators of the plot and the helpers of the murderers should be reached, and that the reason why they had so much money should be elucidated. But Austria-Hungary will never, in spite of this, follow a policy of revenge, and we ought not to allow ourselves to be persuaded, even with strong reasons for suspicion, to let our anger fall upon the millions of Serbs, of whom so many live in Austria, and who are our co-citizens. The fanatics, however, who arranged the conspiracy, and who got the bombs from Belgrade, must be caught, and the roots of the evil removed from Bosnia.

On July 1st, Princip, in the course of the

examination at Serajevo, made a cynical confession and acknowledged that he had been an anarchist for years. On the same day London received the first intimation that strong official action was intended.

A council was held at the Foreign Office in Vienna, at which, besides Count Berchtold, the War Minister, General Krobatin, and the Chief of the General Staff, Baron Conrad von Hachendorf, were present. Count Berchtold made it clear that he intended to address a request to the Servian Government calling on it to institute an inquiry with regard to the persons who might be responsible for the outrage of Sunday, as all the indications pointed to a conspiracy hatched in Servia.

The excitement felt in Austria-Hungary against the Servians, in whose capital, as was then quite certain, the instigators of the crime were to be found, was increased throughout the Monarchy by the language employed by the Belgrade Press. Servian journals spread the infamous story that the Archduke Karl Stefan, who was supposed to have been at variance with the late heir to the throne, was responsible for the attempt being made.

On July 1st, too, Dr. E. J. Dillon, the well-known authority on foreign affairs and special correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, telegraphed from Constantinople:

That Servia and Montenegro are resolved to proclaim the union of both countries under the Servian King when the appropriate hour has struck is undoubted. I myself published this announcement in April. A similar project was on the point of being

realised before, but was thwarted by unforeseen events.

It is sure to come, but what is less certain is how it will be received by Austria, who may regard her internal equilibrium as endangered by the centrifugal tendency which would follow the creation of a large Servian force of attraction.

To my knowledge that was the view taken by Government circles in Vienna during the progress of the Balkan war. I do not believe it has been modified.

As the Servians and Montenegrins are identical in religion, and all but identical in race; and as, further, a certain proportion of Montenegro's military and educational expenses are met out of funds provided by the Russian Government, the reference to Austria in Dr. Dillon's message will be understood.

On July 2nd many remarkable statements were made in the course of the examination of the two assassins at Serajevo. They are quoted here, not merely because they throw considerable light on the origin of the plot, but because the statements made by the prisoners may be taken as typical of the feelings of the average Servian towards Austria-Hungary and the Austrian régime. The "Narodna Odbrana" Society mentioned by Cabrinovic was destined to figure later on in the Austrian Note to Servia.

The examining judge, Dr. Pfeifer, stated "that the result of the inquiry showed plainly enough, and without a shadow of doubt, that there was a conspiracy. Princip and Cabrinovic denied this at first, but later both acknowledged the

fact. We cannot now," the judge declared, " divulge the names of the eleven conspirators, as some of them are not yet arrested. This is neither a socialistic nor a terroristic attempt. Both the assassins committed deeds for national ideals, and in the interests of the Servian National party. Whether the deed was originated in Servia, or whether the men acted on their own account, cannot be determined. It is very remarkable that a sum of 2,000 kronen (£80) was found in Princip's dwelling, most of it in gold. Gold is used in the Balkans only for the payment of quite special services."

According to statements made by the State Attorney, Dr. Svara, Cabrinovic, who threw the bomb, confessed: " I had made preparations for the attempt for a long time beforehand. With the bomb that I threw at the Heir to the Throne and his wife I wished to destroy the present régime. I knew that the Archduke Francis Ferdinand was one of the strongest supporters of the old régime. I wished to annihilate him."

Here, Dr. Svara added, the assassin declared expressly that he did not mean by those phrases the reform of the monarchical State under the present régime, but that he meant destruction of the rule of the House of Hapsburg, and he hoped that the murder of the Heir to the Throne would assist the design.

The State Attorney then said that Princip had made the following confession:

" Although I was born in Bosnia, the Big Servian idea has always existed in me since my

earliest childhood. I considered it unjust that a foreign power should be established in Bosnia, where the Serbs, on account of their numbers and their commercial and economic position, should take part in the government. It pained me that Austria should oppress us, for she is the old and eternal enemy of Servia. I also knew that the first place among those who were hated by Serbs was occupied by the Archduke, Francis Ferdinand. I knew that he was the sworn enemy of all Servian aspirations, and that he had sworn to destroy Servia and the Servian dynasty. I hope that the fatal revolver shots will open the way to the Servian army to march here to occupy Bosnia, for this land is destined by its inclinations and traditions to belong to Big Servia."

Finally, the State Attorney stated that the conspiracy was concocted in a Belgrade café, where they knew days before what was planned against the Heir to the Throne. In Belgrade it was openly said that the Archduke Francis Ferdinand would not leave Bosnia alive.

The fresh examination of Cabrinovic also produced some sensational revelations. He said that he got the bomb from Major Milan Pribicevic, who was in the Servian military service, and was also secretary of the "Narodna Odbrana," an anti-Austrian society. Pribicevic, it was stated, was acting as representative of the chief of the Servian General Staff. Pribicevic told Cabrinovic and Princip to apply to a well-known Komitaji,*

* Komitajis are "irregular" Bulgarian and Servian soldiers, not far removed from bandits, who played a prominent part in the Balkan War.

Cyganievic, whom he commissioned to get the bombs from the arsenal of Kragujevac. Cabrinovic and Princip got six bombs and six Browning pistols, but had to promise to find four more conspirators for the plot.

On July 3rd, the day of the funeral of the Archduke and his consort, there were noisy demonstrations against the members of the Servian Legation in Vienna, and infuriated crowds made unsuccessful attempts to tear down the Servian flag. They were driven off by the police, and, after a few scuffles in the streets, the crowds re-formed and made for the Russian Embassy, where they contented themselves with shouting, " Down with the Servian murderers and their friends ! "

During the next few days bitter Press attacks by the Servian papers on Austria continued to be made, and were answered with equal bitterness ; but in high Court and diplomatic circles it was not thought likely that a war would follow. Later, however, there were indications that the position had become graver.

The Serajevo tragedy was discussed in the joint Ministerial Council, held in Vienna on July 7th.

Before the council met there was a conference of Ministers with the Chief of the General Staff, Baron Conrad, and the Naval Commandant, Admiral Haus. From this circumstance it was concluded that besides the political situation the military position was also discussed. The meeting lasted from 11.30 a.m. until 6.45 p.m. The long duration of these deliberations showed

plainly enough that it was of great importance. The chief subject of deliberation was the "Big Servian" agitation in Bosnia. The outrage at Serajevo had thrown a lurid light upon the situation in Bosnia, and showed that the conditions which the Servian conspirators had created there were untenable. The Ministerial Council, therefore, weighed the measures which must be taken to root out the agitation. It was said that the Austrian love of peace was quite extraordinary, "but, in view of the attitude of the entire Servian Press, it will probably be made very difficult to preserve our love of peace. The Servian Press has first excused the attempt at Serajevo, and now it expresses satisfaction even at the murder. We can only answer to this that Austria-Hungary, in spite of her love of peace, will turn to the sword if she is forced to do so."

The official report on the Ministerial Council stated that: "A certain connection between the attempt and political 'affairs' has been discovered, which must be further inquired into."

Meanwhile, news concerning the Council had a serious influence upon the Viennese Bourse, which had been somewhat affected ever since the date of the assassination. On July 7th the fall in prices was unusually great.

Count Berchtold went to Ischl that night to lay the decisions taken by the Ministerial Council before the Emperor. It was believed that the Austro-Hungarian Government intended to take a diplomatic step in Belgrade.

It was not immediately divulged what the nature of the "diplomatic step" would be; but

the *Pester Lloyd* stated on July 8th that: "Nothing will be demanded of the Servian Government that can affect their national self-consciousness or the national dignity entrusted to their care." Measures, it was added, would be taken to guard the Bosnian frontier more strictly.

On July 10th it was announced that the aged Austrian Emperor had agreed to the "diplomatic step" at Serajevo. This declaration was made to the Foreign Minister, Count Berchtold, who had a special audience of the Emperor at Ischl. It was believed that after the conclusion of the investigations in Serajevo the Servian Government would be acquainted with the facts and with the names of the compromised, and would be invited, through diplomatic channels, to render those implicated who were in Servian territory answerable. Further, that Servia would be invited to give certain guarantees that in future the "Great Servian" propaganda in regions within the confines of the Dual Monarchy would not only not be favoured by the Servian Government, but so far as it lay within its influence would be hindered.

This outcome of the audience corresponded with the expectations that were held, with some few exceptions, in all parts of the Monarchy, by those who were well acquainted with the Emperor's love of peace. It also corresponded with the utterances of the Hungarian Premier, Count Tisza, in the Hungarian Parliament on July 9th.

Count Julius Andrassy asked "whether the threads of the outrage really led to Belgrade." He further declared that the conditions in Bosnia could be characterised as such that a revolution

might break out at any moment. Count Tisza protested against the latter assertion in the most decisive manner, and said that Bosnia's incorporation with the monarchy was threatened in no manner whatever. As to the reports that certain circles and persons in Belgrade were implicated in the plot, he gave assurances that the investigations were being carried out with great thoroughness, but that until they were concluded no information could be divulged.

The peroration of Count Tisza's speech seemed to show that Austria-Hungary wished for peace with Servia, but not peace at any price. If the "Great Servian" agitation on Austrian soil ceased, peace would be preserved. Press comments in Vienna and Buda-Pesth were also in the same sense. A high official even volunteered the information that:

"We expect and wish that the Servian Government will comply with our just wishes. If Belgrade refuses to lend us assistance in discovering the authors of the plot and seeks to protect the murderers, Servia will place herself outside the pale of the civilised nations, as she did at the assassination of King Alexander. We hope that in Servia they will not commit the madness of any longer abusing our almost superhuman patience."

Later on the same day it was announced that Austria-Hungary would demand of Servia that the assassins of Serajevo should be confronted with those who abetted them in Belgrade. There was a precedent for this. In the year 1868, after the murder of Prince Michael Obrenovitch in

Belgrade, the Servian Government requested the confrontation of the murderer with Prince Alexander Karageorgevich, who was accessory to the crime and was then in Hungary. Austria-Hungary granted this demand.

It was stated on the following day that the Triple Entente had taken a friendly step in Belgrade, and had insisted on the necessity of measures which should be calculated to tranquillise Austria. It was also declared that the Russian Ambassador in Vienna, M. Schebeko, had offered Count Berchtold his services in the coming " negotiations " with Servia.

Dr. E. J. Dillon—who was the only journalist that kept Western Europe thoroughly in touch with every detail of the plans, wishes, and opinions of the Austrian Government—sent a long telegram to his paper on Saturday, July 11th, which appeared on Tuesday, July 14th. This message, which is given below, summed up the whole situation with unusual clearness, and was widely quoted by the Press of four continents. For the first time the point of view of the Austrian Government was adequately presented to the world :

I have received a very remarkable commentary on the feeling called forth in Austria-Hungary against Servia by the Serajevo outrage from one of the highest officials of the State. My informant's statement is as follows :

In order to understand the feelings that have been excited in Austria-Hungary by the Serajevo murders, the evils to which this country has already been

subjected at the hands of her small neighbours in the South-East must be taken into account. There can be no doubt that Servia's policy for more than ten years past has been directed towards the ultimate end of wresting such regions as are inhabited by Serbs from Austria-Hungary, and that she has perhaps even hoped to gain the entire Southern Slavonic territory now incorporated with the Monarchy. The thought alone that the neighbouring State entertains such projects destroys all confidence with finality, absolutely preventing the enjoyment of the full measure of peace and quiet. To this is added the fact the Servia employs in her fight against the Monarchy means that are not considered usual in political conflicts, and that have been banned in all civilised States from the first. Conspiracy and assassination are the principal weapons of the Servian State, and the Servian Press never ceases to recommend to the people of its country means which would not find the approval of Europe.

It is not only Austria-Hungary which feels the effect of these unscrupulous anarchistic methods. Europe learned with horror of the assassination of King Alexander and his wife some years ago. We then come to the attempted assassination of King Nicholas, the father-in-law of the present King of Servia, which is the next event in the bloody chapter of Servian history. The unscrupulous Serb does not even spare the dead in his political fight. Servian fanatics plundered the tomb of Prince Alexander Karageorgevitch during the Christmas festival in 1911, and carried away his skull from the Vienna churchyard where he was buried, throwing it on a rubbish heap outside an adjacent factory. Servian opponents of the present dynasty perpetrated this act, which is worthy of mention, as at that time Belgrade police officials came to Vienna, with the permission of the

Austrian Government, to push their investigations here. The demand made by the Austrian Press that police officials from Vienna should be permitted to continue their investigations of the Serajevo crime in Belgrade is rejected by the Belgrade Press as an unheard of proposal.

The murder of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife is the latest event in the bloody chapter of New Servian history. Even the Russian Press did not doubt that the crime originated in Belgrade, in its first excitement over the dreadful news from Serajevo. This is highly characteristic of what the Russians expect from the present Servian policy. Even if the complicity of Belgrade in the murder cannot be established by judicial proofs, which is still quite uncertain, the fact must be weighed that already at the present moment the political proof of the crime may be regarded as established in the eyes of Europe. News from Belgrade has been repeatedly received showing that there was much satisfaction at the crime there; such proofs of complicity are not sufficient for the judge, but they are enough for the politician. Whoever has followed the seditious language of the Servian Press for years will not be surprised that persons educated in these opinions are ready to press murderous weapons into the hands of youths without moral resistance, weapons which were to serve for the murder of a Prince. Whatever proofs the investigation of the Serajevo murder may bring, the politico-moral proofs of Servian complicity are already there, and this is the explanation of the great excitement among the populace of Austria-Hungary.

The Servian Press, it is true, makes efforts to prove that this excitement is unjustified and exaggerated, and it finds friends in Europe who are also of this opinion, and who blame the Monarchy bitterly for

every step taken in its defence, even before it has been adopted. This all-too-zealous defence of the murderers of the Prince brings us to a number of questions. Would England permit agitation inimical to the State such as has been carried on in Bosnia from Belgrade to be prosecuted in Egypt or in India? Would the appearance of an English Prince in Egypt or India be characterised as a provocation of the natives? This is what the "Great Servian" agitators do, however. They defend the Serajevo murderers by saying that the Archduke should not have gone to Serajevo on a great Servian national fête day. What would the Americans say if, as a consequence of the hate against the United States preached by Mexico, a Mexican fanatic murdered President Wilson? But the Servian Press dares to speak of an anti-Servian "pogrom" in Bosnia, and to announce that the total destruction of the Serbs in Bosnia has been planned by the Austrian authorities for the immediate future.

Many French journals have gone so far as to consider the "Great Servian" agitation on Austrian ground as comprehensible. What would they say in France, for example, if, as a consequence of Pan-Islamitic propaganda, the Governor-General of Algeria were murdered? The French Press also repeats the phrase first printed by the Belgrade papers that the Serajevo assassinations were the consequence of long and systematic oppression of the Bosnian Serb. All well-informed persons, however, know that the Serbs in Bosnia never had to complain of oppression. They have had their fair share of representation in the Bosnian Diet for some years, and enjoy wide-reaching autonomy in church and school. Persons really acquainted with the situation have asked whether the Serbs in Bosnia do not enjoy too much freedom. The truth is that they are continually

incited to sedition from Belgrade, and have always formed a centre of disquiet in Europe.

For many years the Monarchy has been disturbed and disquieted by its small Servian neighbour. The position in which Austria-Hungary has been placed by Servia may finally become untenable even for a Great Power. She herself only is able to decide whether she can continue to bear the present situation or not. Austria-Hungary has given such proofs of her love of peace in the course of the last few years to all Europe that it certainly cannot be thought that she will willingly break into strife with Servia. The foreign policy of Austria-Hungary is directed by the Emperor Francis Joseph, on whom Europe has conferred the honourable title of a lover of peace. His first councillor, Count Berchtold, is not known as a firebrand by any means. These two personages alone afford a sufficient guarantee that the Monarchy will take the decisions made necessary by the present situation with the greatest calm and reflection, however events may fall out, and with the ardent wish that peace may be preserved.

It is of the utmost importance not only for the Monarchy, but for all Europe, that Servia shall be reminded of her duties of neighbourly correctness. To render possible Austria's task of instructing Servia in her duty in this respect by peaceable means it is necessary that the public opinion in all countries should not lend encouragement, even in the least degree, to the heated passions in Belgrade. Even warnings to the Monarchy that she ought not to go too far in her indignation at the Serajevo murders are regarded as an encouragement in Belgrade. Such warnings are superfluous. Austria-Hungary, like the rest of Europe, wishes for peace. Like the remainder of Europe, she cannot suffer the murder of princes. Why, however, should it be doubted

that Servia will desist from her constant disturbance of the peace and incitement to murder of princes without resort being had to extreme means?

Early on the morning of July 13th disquieting rumours as to the fate that had befallen the Austro-Hungarian Minister in Belgrade, Baron Giesl, were circulated not only in Vienna, but also in Buda Pesth, as were also reports of increased strain in the relations between Servia and the Monarchy. It is a fact that Baron Giesl received reliable information that serious action, going beyond a demonstration, had been planned against his Legation, and he begged the Servian police, on the strength of this news, to provide a special guard for the protection of the Legation buildings.

Upon hearing of the measures taken to guard the Legation a regular panic broke out in the Austro-Hungarian colony in Belgrade. It was reported that the Serbs intended to revenge themselves on the Austrians and Hungarians in Belgrade for the attacks made upon Serbs in Bosnia, and more particularly in Serajevo, and it was stated with great insistence that a general attack was planned for the night. Many families fled to Semlin, while others took refuge in the Legation and in the Consulate.

Apparently the night passed quietly, but unquestionably there was great irritation among the population. This was increased by the doubts expressed by some Belgrade journals as to whether the death of the Russian Minister, M. de Hartwig, who died in the house of the Austrian Minister, was due to natural causes. It was further reported by these journals that a very important

document which was in the Minister's bag had disappeared. All these reports were devoid of any foundation, as was acknowledged by the Servian Government.

On July 15th a strong note of warning was sounded and it was made clear that if the Servian Government failed to comply with the demands which the Austrian Government intended to put forward, "deeds and not words" would be inevitable. On the same day a little-remembered economic feature of the tension was summed up as follows:

It is understood in Austrian circles in London that the Vienna Government is not altogether satisfied with the Servian attitude in respect to the assassination of the Archduke and his consort at Serajevo. It is not at all unlikely that when the official inquiries at Serajevo are concluded an application will be made to the Servian Government for its permission to allow representatives of the Austrian detective service to visit Belgrade in order to make more complete inquiries into the origin of the plot. In view of the possible participation of well-known Servian public men in the more extreme propaganda carried on by the Pan-Servian League, it is thought quite possible that this application may not be entertained. In that event the relations between the two countries will become even more strained than they are at the present moment, and very grave developments will almost inevitably follow.

It is recalled that the dispute between Austria and Servia with regard to the Oriental railways has not yet been definitely settled, and the Servian Government appears to have definitely rejected the Franco-Austrian scheme for the internationalisation of the Oriental Railway tracks in Servian

territory. The main feature of the recent negotiations on this matter was the emphatic repudiation by Austria of Servia's claim to regulate the tariff on that section of the Oriental Railway under her jurisdiction. It may be further pointed out that Servia has not yet been able to secure definite access to the sea through her own territory, and that in consequence Austria is in a position to bring strong economic, as well as military, pressure to bear upon her southern neighbour.

In the event of the failure of the two Governments to arrive at a satisfactory agreement respecting the work of the Pan-Servian League in Bosnia and Southern Hungary, Austria would certainly feel herself to be acting within her rights in asking Servia to give definite guarantees that the strong political agitation now being carried on against Austrian rule shall cease.

On July 19th the situation was becoming acute. The inquiry at Serajevo was proceeding, but no definite official statement had been made on the subject. Even the diplomatic world was in the dark, for we find Sir Edward Grey writing to the British Ambassador in Berlin, Sir E. Goschen, on July 20th, as follows *:

Foreign Office,

Sir, *July 20th*, 1914.

I ASKED the German Ambassador to-day if he had any news of what was going on in Vienna with regard to Servia.

* This letter, and all the other official letters quoted in this book, unless the source is otherwise specified, are taken from the official White Paper: "Correspondence respecting the European crisis" (Cd. 7467, price 9d.) The letters will be found in the White Paper under the dates given.

He said that he had not, but Austria was certainly going to take some step, and he regarded the situation as very uncomfortable.

I said that I had not heard anything recently, except that Count Berchtold, in speaking to the Italian Ambassador in Vienna, had deprecated the suggestion that the situation was grave, but had said that it should be cleared up.

The German Ambassador said that it would be a very desirable thing if Russia could act as a mediator with regard to Servia.

I said that I assumed that the Austrian Government would not do anything until they had first disclosed to the public their case against Servia, founded presumably upon what they had discovered at the trial.

The Ambassador said that he certainly assumed that they would act upon some case that would be made known.

I said that this would make it easier for others, such as Russia, to counsel moderation in Belgrade, In fact, the more Austria could keep her demand within reasonable limits, and the stronger the justification she could produce for making any demand, the more chance there would be of smoothing things over. I hated the idea of a war between any of the Great Powers, and that any of them should be dragged into a war by Servia would be detestable.

The Ambassador agreed whole-heartedly in this sentiment.

I am, etc.

E. GREY.

On July 22nd the following reply was received from Sir E. Goschen :

Berlin,

July 22nd, 1914.

LAST night I met Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the forthcoming Austrian *démarche* at Belgrade was alluded to by his Excellency in the conversation that ensued. His Excellency was evidently of opinion that this step on Austria's part would have been made ere this. He insisted that question at issue was one for settlement between Servia and Austria alone, and that there should be no interference from outside in the discussions between those two countries. He had therefore considered it inadvisable that the Austro-Hungarian Government should be approached by the German Government on the matter. He had, however, on several occasions in conversation with the Servian Minister, emphasised the extreme importance that Austro-Servian relations should be put on a proper footing.

Finally, his Excellency observed to me that for a long time past the attitude adopted towards Servia by Austria had, in his opinion, been one of great forbearance.

On July 23rd Sir Edward Grey wrote to Sir Maurice de Bunsen, British Ambassador at Vienna, saying that on the following day he hoped to receive from Count Mensdorff, the Austrian Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, a copy of the communication which he understood was being made that day to Servia. In his lengthy letter Sir Edward states that he could not commit himself to an opinion from the summary of the communication which he had already had; but he expresses opposition to the principle of a time-limit for a reply. He tells the Ambassador that he said to Count Mensdorff that "a time-limit

was generally a thing to be used only in the last resort, after other means had been tried and failed." The letter continued:

Count Mensdorff said that if Servia, in the interval that had elapsed since the murder of the Archduke, had voluntarily instituted an enquiry on her own territory, all this might have been avoided. In 1909, Servia had said in a note that she intended to live on terms of good neighbourhood with Austria; but she had never kept her promise, she had stirred up agitation the object of which was to disintegrate Austria, and it was absolutely necessary for Austria to protect herself.

I said that I would not comment upon or criticise what Count Mensdorff had told me this afternoon, but I could not help dwelling upon the awful consequences involved in the situation. Great apprehension had been expressed to me, not specially by M. Cambon and Count Benckendorff, but also by others, as to what might happen, and it had been represented to me that it would be very desirable that those who had influence in St. Petersburg should use it on behalf of patience and moderation. I had replied that the amount of influence that could be used in this sense would depend upon how reasonable were the Austrian demands and how strong the justification that Austria might have discovered for making her demands. The possible consequences of the present situation were terrible. If as many as four Great Powers of Europe—let us say Austria, France, Russia, and Germany—were engaged in war, it seemed to me that it must involve the expenditure of so vast a sum of money, and such an interference with trade, that a war would be accompanied or followed by a complete collapse of European credit and industry. In these days, in great

industrial States, this would mean a state of things worse than that of 1848, and, irrespective of who were victors in the war, many things might be completely swept away.

Count Mensdorff did not demur to this statement of the possible consequences of the present situation, but he said that all would depend upon Russia.

I made the remark that, in a time of difficulties such as this, it was just as true to say that it required two to keep the peace as it was to say, ordinarily, that it took two to make a quarrel. I hoped very much that, if there were difficulties, Austria and Russia would be able in the first instance to discuss them directly with each other.

Count Mensdorff said that he hoped this would be possible, but he was under the impression that the attitude in St. Petersburg had not been very favourable recently.

On July 22nd some surprise was caused at the sitting of the Hungarian Parliament in Buda Pesth, because the Prime Minister, Count Tisza, refused to answer questions regarding the situation between Austria and Servia. This attitude on the part of the Premier gave rise to a great deal of nervousness.

On the same day it was semi-officially stated in the Berlin *Lokalanzeiger* that the German and Italian Governments had been confidentially informed of the "scope" of the Austrian Note to Servia and that "the impending *démarche* had found complete approval here."

In other organs of the Press the approaching crisis was spoken of in language of increasing gravity. Writing in the Conservative *Deutsche Tageszeitung*, Count Reventlow said: "It would

almost seem as if a 'tolerably definite' situation in Europe could only be brought about by war." He urged on Austria vigorous and determined action, and expressed the ardent wish that "the German Empire would regulate its attitude and policy, not by exigencies of the internal politics of the British Government, but solely with a view to its own future and that of the Triple Alliance."

The National Liberal *Deutsche Courier* expressed a similar opinion that "every intelligent man must see that a world-war must come some day," since the "political atmosphere has for years been charged with electricity and is only waiting for a thunderstorm."

The view was put forward in many quarters that the facts revealed by Senator Humbert's* disclosures and the internal crisis in England rendered the present moment very favourable for a definite settlement by Austria of her Balkan problems.

This view proved to be prophetic enough; but those who put it forward hardly seemed to realise what would be the consequences of the resolute Austrian attitude. They appear to have miscalculated also the lengths to which Italy was prepared to go.

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* M. Humbert had just stated in the French Senate that the country was unprepared for war, owing to defects in the army and lack of ammunition.

CHAPTER II

THE AUSTRIAN NOTE—GERMAN SUPPORT FOR VIENNA—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN SIR EDWARD GREY AND SIR MAURICE DE BUNSEN.

ALTHOUGH enough material had been put before the British public to enable it to realise the extreme gravity of the Austro-Servian situation, the final blow came unexpectedly by reason of the delicate situation at home. The Conference on the Amending Bill had just failed; it had met at Buckingham Palace for the last time; a serious riot was about to occur in Dublin; and in financial quarters the proposals put forward in connection with the Budget were still being eagerly discussed. But on July 24th came the news that Austria-Hungary had presented what was virtually an ultimatum to the Servian Government. The document was originally communicated by Count Mensdorff to Sir Edward Grey in French. The translation printed below is the official one of the Foreign Office—that which appears also in the White Paper:

THE Austro-Hungarian Government felt compelled to address the following note to the Servian Government on the 23rd July, through the medium of the Austro-Hungarian Minister at Belgrade:

"On the 31st March, 1909, the Servian Minister in Vienna, on the instructions of the Servian Government, made the following declaration to the Imperial and Royal Government:

"'Servia recognises that the *fait accompli* regarding Bosnia has not affected her rights, and consequently she will conform to the decisions that the Powers may take in conformity with article 25 of the Treaty of Berlin. In deference to the advice of the Great Powers Servia undertakes to renounce from now onwards the attitude of protest and opposition which she has adopted with regard to the annexation since last autumn. She undertakes, moreover, to modify the direction of her policy with regard to Austria-Hungary and to live in future on good neighbourly terms with the latter.'"

The history of recent years, and in particular the painful events of the 28th June last, have shown the existence of a subversive movement with the object of detaching a part of the territories of Austria-Hungary from the Monarchy. The movement, which had its birth under the eye of the Servian Government, has gone so far as to make itself manifest on both sides of the Servian frontier in the shape of acts of terrorism and a series of outrages and murders.

Far from carrying out the formal undertakings contained in the declaration of the 31st March, 1909, the Royal Servian Government has done nothing to repress these movements. It has permitted the criminal machinations of various societies and associations directed against the Monarchy, and has tolerated unrestrained language on the part of the Press, the glorification of the perpetrators of outrages, and the participation of officers and functionaries in subversive agitation. It has permitted an unwholesome propaganda in public instruction. In short,

it has permitted all manifestations of a nature to incite the Servian population to hatred of the Monarchy and contempt of its institutions.

This culpable tolerance of the Royal Servian Government had not ceased at the moment when the events of the 28th June last proved its fatal consequences to the whole world.

It results from the depositions and confessions of the criminal perpetrators of the outrage of the 28th June that the Serajevo assassinations were planned in Belgrade, that the arms and explosives with which the murderers were provided had been given to them by Servian officers and functionaries belonging to the Narodna Odbrana, and finally, that the passage into Bosnia of the criminals and their arms was organised and effected by the chiefs of the Servian frontier service.

The above-mentioned results of the magisterial investigation do not permit the Austro-Hungarian Government to pursue any longer the attitude of expectant forbearance which it has maintained for years in face of the machinations hatched in Belgrade, and thence propagated in the territories of the Monarchy. The results, on the contrary, impose on it the duty of putting an end to the intrigues which form a perpetual menace to the tranquillity of the Monarchy.

To achieve this end the Imperial and Royal Government sees itself compelled to demand from the Royal Servian Government a formal assurance that it condemns this dangerous propaganda against the Monarchy; in other words, the whole series of tendencies, the ultimate aim of which is to attach from the Monarchy territories belonging to it, and that it undertakes to suppress by every means this criminal and terrorist propaganda.

In order to give a formal character to this

undertaking the Royal Servian Government shall publish on the front page of its "Official Journal" of the 26th June (13th July) the following declaration:

The Royal Government of Servia condemns the propaganda directed against Austria-Hungary—*i.e.*, the general tendency of which the final aim is to detach from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy territories belonging to it, and it sincerely deplores the fatal consequences of these criminal proceedings.

The Royal Government regrets that Servian officers and functionaries participated in the above-mentioned propaganda and thus compromised the good neighbourly relations to which the Royal Government was solemnly pledged by its declaration of the 31st March, 1909.

The Royal Government, which disapproves and repudiates all idea of interfering or attempting to interfere with the destinies of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austro-Hungary, considers it its duty formally to warn officers and functionaries and the whole population of the kingdom, that henceforward it will proceed with the utmost rigour against persons who may be guilty of such machinations, which it will use all its efforts to anticipate and suppress.

This declaration shall simultaneously be communicated to the Royal army as an order of the day by His Majesty the King and shall be published in the "Official Bulletin" of the Army.

The Royal Servian Government further undertakes:

1. To suppress any publication which incites to hatred and contempt of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the general tendency of which is directed against its territorial integrity;

2. To dissolve immediately the society styled Narodna Odbrana, to confiscate all its means of propaganda, and to proceed in the same manner against other societies and their branches in Servia which engage in propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The Royal Government shall take the necessary measures to prevent the societies dissolved from continuing their activity under another name and form ;

3. To eliminate without delay from public instruction in Servia, both as regards the teaching body and also as regards the methods of instruction, everything that serves, or might serve, to foment the propaganda against Austria-Hungary ;

4. To remove from the military service, and from the administration in general, all officers and functionaries guilty of propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy whose names and deeds the Austro-Hungarian Government reserves to itself the right of communicating to the Royal Government ;

5. To accept the collaboration in Servia of representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Government in the suppression of the subversive movement directed against the territorial integrity of the Monarchy ;

6. To take judicial proceedings against accessories to the plot of the 28th June who are on Servian territory. Delegates of the Austro-Hungarian Government will take part in the investigation relating thereto ;

7. To proceed without delay to the arrest of Major Voija Tankositch and of the individual named Milan Ciganovitch, a Servian State employé, who have been compromised by the results of the magisterial enquiry at Serajevo ;

8. To prevent by effective measures the co-operation

of the Servian authorities in the illicit traffic in arms and explosives across the frontier, to dismiss and punish severely the officials of the frontier service at Schabatz and Loznica guilty of having assisted the perpetrators of the Serajevo crime by facilitating their passage across the frontier;

9. To furnish the Imperial and Royal Government with explanations regarding the unjustifiable utterances of high Servian officials, both in Servia and abroad, who, notwithstanding their official position, did not hesitate after the crime of the 28th June to express themselves in interviews in terms of hostility to the Austro-Hungarian Government; and, finally,

10. To notify the Imperial and Royal Government without delay of the execution of the measures comprised under the preceding heads.

The Austro-Hungarian Government expects the reply of the Royal Government at the latest by six o'clock on Saturday evening, the 25th July.

A memorandum dealing with the results of the magisterial enquiry at Serajevo with regard to the officials mentioned under heads (7) and (8) is attached to this note.

I have the honour to request your Excellency to bring the contents of this note to the knowledge of the Government to which you are accredited, accompanying your communication with the following observations:

On the 31st March, 1909, the Royal Servian Government addressed to Austria-Hungary the declaration of which the text is reproduced above.

On the very day after this declaration Servia embarked on a policy of instilling revolutionary ideas into the Serb subjects of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and so preparing the separation of

the Austro-Hungarian territory on the Servian frontier.

Servia became the centre of a criminal agitation.

No time was lost in the formation of societies and groups, whose object, either avowed or secret, was the creation of disorders on Austro-Hungarian territory. These societies and groups count among their members generals and diplomatists, Government officials and judges—in short, men at the top of official and unofficial society in the kingdom.

Servian journalism is almost entirely at the service of this propaganda, which is directed against Austria-Hungary, and not a day passes without the organs of the Servian Press stirring up their readers to hatred or contempt for the neighbouring Monarchy, or to outrages directed more or less openly against its security and integrity.

A large number of agents are employed in carrying on by every means the agitation against Austria-Hungary and corrupting the youth in the frontier provinces.

Since the recent Balkan crisis there has been a recrudescence of the spirit of conspiracy inherent in Servian politicians, which has left such sanguinary imprints on the history of the kingdom. Individuals belonging formerly to bands employed in Macedonia have come to place themselves at the disposal of the terrorist propaganda against Austria-Hungary.

In the presence of these doings, to which Austria-Hungary has been exposed for years, the Servian Government has not thought it incumbent on it to take the slightest step. The Servian Government has thus failed in the duty imposed on it by the solemn declaration of the 31st March, 1909, and acted in opposition to the will of Europe and the undertaking given to Austria-Hungary.

The patience of the Imperial and Royal Government in the face of the provocative attitude of Servia was inspired by the territorial disinterestedness of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the hope that the Servian Government would end in spite of everything by appreciating Austria-Hungary's friendship at its true value. By observing a benevolent attitude towards the political interests of Servia, the Imperial and Royal Government hoped that the kingdom would finally decide to follow an analogous line of conduct on its own side. In particular Austria-Hungary expected a development of this kind in the political ideas of Servia, when, after the events of 1912, the Imperial and Royal Government, by its disinterested and ungrudging attitude, made such a considerable aggrandisement of Servia possible.

The benevolence which Austria-Hungary showed towards the neighbouring State had no restraining effect on the proceedings of the kingdom, which continued to tolerate on its territory propaganda of which the fatal consequences were demonstrated to the whole world on the 28th June last, when the Heir Presumptive to the Monarchy and his illustrious consort fell victims to a plot hatched at Belgrade.

In the presence of this state of things the Imperial and Royal Government has felt compelled to take new and urgent steps at Belgrade with a view to inducing the Servian Government to stop the incendiary movement that is threatening the security and integrity of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

The Imperial and Royal Government is convinced that in taking this step it will find itself in full agreement with the sentiments of all civilised nations, who cannot permit regicide to become a weapon that can be employed with impunity in political strife, and the peace of Europe to be continually disturbed by movements emanating from Belgrade.

In support of the above the Imperial and Royal Government holds at the disposal of the British Government a *dossier* elucidating the Servian intrigues and the connection between these intrigues and the murder of the 28th June.

An identical communication has been addressed to the Imperial and Royal representatives accredited to the other signatory Powers.

You are authorised to leave a copy of this despatch in the hands of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Vienna, *July* 24, 1914.

ANNEX

The criminal enquiry opened by the Court of Serajevo against Gavrilo Princip and his accessories in and before the act of assassination committed by them on the 28th June last, has up to the present led to the following conclusions:

1. The plot, having as its object the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand at the time of his visit to Serajevo, was formed at Belgrade by Gavrilo Princip, Nedeljko Cabrinovic, one Milan Ciganovic, and Trifko Grabez, with the assistance of Commander Voija Tankosic.

2. The six bombs and the four Browning pistols and ammunition with which the guilty parties committed the act were delivered to Princip, Cabrinovic, and Grabez by the man Milan Ciganovic and Commander Voija Tankosic at Belgrade.

3. The bombs are hand-grenades coming from the arms depot of the Servian army at Kragujevac.

4. In order to ensure the success of the act, Ciganovic taught Princip, Cabrinovic, and Grabez how to use the bombs, and gave lessons in firing Browning pistols to Princip and Grabez in a forest near the shooting ground at Topschider.

5. To enable Princip, Cabrinovic, and Grabez to cross the frontier of Bosnia-Herzegovina and smuggle in their contraband of arms secretly, a secret system of transport was organised by Ciganovic.

By this arrangement the introduction into Bosnia-Herzegovina of criminals and their arms was effected by the officials controlling the frontiers at Chabac (Rade Popovic) and Loznica, as well as by the customs officer Rudivoj Grbic, of Loznica, with the assistance of various individuals.

On receipt of this Note, Sir Edward Grey talked the matter over with Count Mensdorff, and afterwards sent the following telegram to Sir Maurice de Bunsen :

Foreign Office.
July 24th, 1914.

NOTE addressed to Servia, together with an explanation of the reasons leading up to it, has been communicated to me by Count Mensdorff.

In the ensuing conversation with his Excellency I remarked that it seemed to me a matter for great regret that a time limit, and such a short one at that, had been insisted upon at this stage of the proceedings. The murder of the Archduke and some of the circumstances respecting Servia quoted in the note aroused sympathy with Austria, as was but natural, but at the same time I have never before seen one State address to another independent State a document of so formidable a character. Demand No. 5 would be hardly consistent with the maintenance of Servia's independent sovereignty if it were to mean, as it seemed that it might, that Austria-Hungary was to be invested with a right to appoint officials who would have authority within the frontiers of Servia.

I added that I felt great apprehension, and that I

should concern myself with the matter simply and solely from the point of view of the peace of Europe. The merits of the dispute between Austria and Servia were not the concern of His Majesty's Government, and such comments as I had made above were not made in order to discuss those merits.

I ended by saying that doubtless we should enter into an exchange of views with other Powers, and that I must await their views as to what could be done to mitigate the difficulties of the situation.

Count Mensdorff replied that the present situation might never have arisen if Servia had held out a hand after the murder of the Archduke; Servia had, however, shown no sign of sympathy or help, though some weeks had already elapsed since the murder; a time limit, said his Excellency, was essential, owing to the procrastination on Servia's part.

I said that if Servia had procrastinated in replying, a time limit could have been introduced later; but, as things now stood, the terms of the Servian reply had been dictated by Austria, who had not been content to limit herself to a demand for a reply within a limit of forty-eight hours from its presentation.

On July 25th, in addition to publishing the text of this remarkably strong Austrian Note, the *Daily Telegraph* gave the first news of the probable outbreak of a European struggle in the event of Servia's reply not being satisfactory. Telephoning at one o'clock on Saturday morning, its Paris correspondent made the following grave announcement:

The German Ambassador, Baron von Schoen, called yesterday afternoon on M. Bienvenu-Martin, who is acting as interim Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and read a Note from his Government.

In the Note it is stated that Germany approves the form and substance of the Austrian ultimatum to Servia, and desires that the conflict between them shall be localised as far as possible.

In case France should take such steps as might not tend to localise the struggle, Germany, the Note states, fears that dangerous friction might arise between the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance.

It is understood that a similar step has been taken by Germany through her Ambassador in St. Petersburg.

The authenticity of this information was afterwards admitted—it was conclusively proved by the subsequent action of Germany—and it was stated that the correspondent was far from exaggerating the tone of the German demand. On the same day there appeared also three telegrams from Dr. E. J. Dillon, who wired from Vienna, and a despatch from St. Petersburg giving the Russian view. Dr. Dillon said:

Private intelligence of a disquieting nature has just reached me by telephone from Buda-Pesth. Contrary to the optimism prevalent in Vienna and even in financial circles here, the responsible and best-informed people in the Hungarian capital entertain the most pessimistic view of Servia's answer and its sequel.

They consider war inevitable, because Servia's refusal to agree to the demands is, they hold, absolutely certain. Hostilities, they add, will begin on Saturday night, and will lead to noteworthy if not decisive results in a day or two afterwards. This belief is now making headway here.

The St. Petersburg representative of the *Telegraph* wired:

The Austrian ultimatum to Servia has come like a thunderbolt out of the blue for Russians. This applies more especially to the unprecedented character and tone of it. I hear that it much astonishes and perplexes Russian diplomatic officials, who have hitherto believed in an amicable settlement of the matter. Serious people are already talking of a possible Russian mobilisation in consequence.

To-day's meeting of the Council of Ministers considered the gravity of the situation in light of this fresh international danger, as well as the position of affairs in St. Petersburg with regard to the strike.

We may expect some bitter comment in the Russian Press on the subject if they are not prevented by the strike developments, which still keep several journals from appearing.

Telegraphing earlier on the previous day from Vienna Dr. Dillon said:

Is it to be war or peace? And if another war is inevitable, will it be localised or will the Olympian gods of Europe descend into the arena to fight for and with their protégés? These questions are on everybody's lips to-day. My personal belief is that war will be avoided. But, having travelled from the extreme south of the monarchy to Vienna, and conversed with various representatives of the population on the way, I am in a position to affirm that almost everybody hopes fervently that the long-threatening storm will burst, not because the national sentiment is suddenly grown bellicose, but because people are sick to death of the periodic crises which throw public and private life out of gear, paralyse trade and commerce, inflict enormous losses on the wealth-creating classes, and are then settled for a couple of months or years, only to break out anew. This view of the

present situation is also shared by the Exchange, which has become relatively quiet after the publication of the Austro-Hungarian Note to the Servian Government.

It is a great mistake to suppose, as most people do, that the dispute between the two States turns upon the dastardly crime which bereft the Habsburg Monarchy of its Heir-Apparent and his Consort. That revolting misdeed is at most only the occasion; the real causes lie much deeper. Stripping the matter of its diplomatic wrappers, I feel warranted in characterising the differences between Austria-Hungary and Servia as the first symptoms of a gigantic struggle, which is bound to make itself felt throughout Europe between Slavs and Teutons, or, as the Austrians would prefer to put it, between the revolutionary and the conservative elements in Eastern Europe, between the nations which are contented with the territory they possess, and desirous of consolidating that, and those whose aim it is to annex the possessions of their neighbours.

Last year, when Servia signed her glorious and lucrative peace, I announced, with the certitude born of first-hand knowledge, that she could no longer live with Austria-Hungary on terms of diplomatic correctness and national distrust. Her relations with that State must be either thoroughly friendly or frankly hostile. I added that the latter alternative implied positive and satisfactory guarantees of a kind which would be defined with precision when a fitting opportunity offered. This announcement was questioned by statesmen of the Triple Entente, who pointed out that my sketch of Austro-Hungarian policy involved interference by that Empire in Servia's domestic affairs, and for that reason could not be an accurate presentment of the intentions of the Vienna Cabinet. To-day they can see for

themselves that my announcement was in strict accordance with fact.

The Austro-Hungarian Note presented to the Belgrade Cabinet is a formal and imperative demand for the guarantees I wrote of a twelvemonth ago, and which since then have never ceased to be present to the minds of the Emperor's responsible Ministers. From the political and military points of view the present moment is naturally deemed favourable, as even a cursory survey of the internal situation of the countries belonging to the Triple Entente will make clear to the dullest apprehension. I have discussed the entire question in all its bearings with those statesmen whose words are historic acts, and on the strength of what I have thus learned I am able to set forth the Austro-Hungarian case as follows:

The Government of the Habsburg Monarchy does not expect the foreign nations to which it is not linked by ties of intimate friendship and alliance to espouse its cause, but it feels naturally desirous of drawing Europe—and in especial the British nation—to a careful consideration of the mainsprings of its present action, and asking them to bring to that consideration an unbiassed mind and their traditional spirit of fairness.

The pith of the matter, then, is this, that Servia, unlike other States, is working, not for her own internal organisation and normal pacific development, but for ends incompatible with the internal tranquillity of the Habsburg Monarchy and its natural instinct for good order and peaceful evolution. And these aims are openly avowed by all political parties and all social classes in the kingdom. The Servian Press is the recognised agency of propaganda which have for their ultimate object neither more nor less than the partition of Austria-Hungary.

Military officers in Belgrade and other cities in the kingdom proclaim openly that Servia's next territorial acquisition will be Bosnia, and that she will not rest satisfied until she has united the Southern Slavs of the Habsburg Monarchy under her sceptre. A few days ago the Archbishop of Uskub declared in public that Bosnia's turn to be incorporated in the kingdom would come next. The Servian Premier himself is alleged to have said to an interviewer that the assassination of the Archduke set back the Slav idea, and that many years would be required to undo the mischief it thus caused, but that time is on Servia's side.

These aggressive principles and the assumption underlying them that Austria-Hungary is ripe for partition have been disseminated abroad as well as at home, and have contributed materially to sow the seeds of dissension between Austria-Hungary and foreign States with which this Government is anxious to cultivate friendly relations. Thus an influential Paris journal, enumerating the topics of conversation which are likely to be discussed by President Poincaré and his illustrious host in St. Petersburg, gives a prominent place to the question of the succession to the possessions of the Habsburg Monarchy, which is in its agony. In the Berlin review, *Preussische Jahrbuecher*, the Russian Professor, Mitrofanoff, sets forth, it is complained, the necessity of regaining in Scandinavia, Roumania, and Turkey the ground surreptitiously won by Germany from Russia.

In a word, the impending break-up of the Habsburg Monarchy is become a recognised political dogma, accepted theoretically by some Powers, but firmly held by others and treated by them as the centre round which their policy, domestic and foreign, revolves. This is especially true of Servia, where

societies and associations, public and secret, flourish, the main object of which is not merely to watch, wait, and utilise opportunities as they present themselves, but to bring them about artificially. These subversive societies count among their members army officers, youthful diplomatists, and civil servants who work for the realisation of their schemes without let or hindrance from the authorities, who ostentatiously proclaim their readiness to live on terms of neighbourliness with the Dual Monarchy.

This aggressive agitation, with its manifold ramifications, is the soil on which the disaffection among the Serbs of Bosnia has sprung up, rendering good government and normal public life there impossible. Come what may, the Austro-Hungarian Government cannot tolerate a condition of affairs wilfully created for the purpose of rendering the living and working of her own law-abiding subjects impossible. This is the root of the matter.

The Servian propaganda paralyse, and are meant to paralyse, the mechanism of administration in the Habsburg Monarchy, and this long-suffering State feels obliged and warranted to suppress that agitation by pacific means, if possible, and by military force if necessary. It is no longer mere prestige that is at stake; it is a question of life or death for the Monarchy, and will be dealt with as such. Consequently, adequate provision has been made for whichever alternative Servia may prefer.

The assassination of the heir to the throne is set down as another of the fruits of the subversive propaganda. But no statesman in either half of the Empire holds King Peter's Government responsible for this revolting crime. On the contrary, they are convinced that it is abhorred by the Cabinet, and that the Servian Ministers would not hesitate to have the murderers and their accomplices punished

with the extreme rigour of the law; and if this deed of blood were the real subject of dispute that conviction would suffice to settle it.

But the real issue lies elsewhere. Again nobody here blames Servian statesmen for harbouring grandiose schemes of conquest for their country, or straining every nerve to realise those schemes. That is their patriotic duty. They are justified in doing all they can to compass this end. But if what they do for this purpose disturbs the peace and endangers the normal existence of Austria-Hungary, then this Power is equally justified in doing all it can to thwart those designs and suppress the aggressive action, public and secret, which has been undertaken to realise them.

Translated into the simple language ef everyday life, the present dispute between the two countries is what the Germans are wont to describe as a question of might. Servia is striving after the partition of the Dual Monarchy, and the Dual Monarchy is resolved to suppress that striving in all its shapes and forms. If the Servian Government refuses to tackle the thorny problem Austria-Hungary will herself take it in hand. It is in this light only, and not as a mere judicial dispute, that the Note presented to the Belgrade Cabinet must be read.

As I wrote last year, the Emperor's Ministers insist upon the complete readjustment of Servia's political schemes and modes of action, to genuine friendship with the Monarchy, and also upon unmistakable outward tokens that this readjustment has been decided upon and will be effectively carried out. That is why only forty-eight hours were allowed for reflection, and why tasks are imposed which will subject the pride of the Servian nation to the most painful ordeal it has ever undergone.

No discussion will be allowed; no extension

of time will be granted. Such in outline is the case as stated here.

It is added that, despite all that has taken place, Austria-Hungary is sincerely desirous of living amicably with the Servian people, and harbours no designs of territorial aggrandisement at their expense. She took no steps to hinder the acquisition of the new provinces by King Peter's Government. Contrary to the firm belief of the statesmen of the Triple Alliance, she did not advance to Salonica because she is satisfied with what she possesses, and is desirous of assisting the work of social and political renovation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In a separate message Dr. Dillon added:

The Central Government here makes no forecasts, but is prepared for all eventualities. Count Berchtold, accompanied by Count Hoyos, leaves Vienna to-night for Ischl, where he will remain until Servia's fateful answer arrives, when he will commuunicate it to the Emperor and receive the monarch's commands.

The Servian Premier arrived at Belgrade at eleven o'clock this morning, and presided over a Cabinet Council at one, but it is probable that the final decision will not be reached before to-night or to-morrow morning.

Meanwhile Austria's allies have taken their stand, which is favourable to the action of this Government and to the employment of all the available means to localise the eventual conflict. It is further assumed that Great Britain will, if hostilities should result, hold aloof, and that France will make her influence felt in preventing, rather than waiting to localise, the struggle.

Respecting Russia's attitude in the contingency of war, opinions are evenly divided, but no doubt

is expressed or felt that if the crisis had not come to a climax until a year or two later, her entire support would be unhesitatingly given to Servia. I record those views as interesting, without feeling called upon to offer my own. I do hold, however, very strongly that the present trial of issues is the first skirmish between two vast forces, which are striving for the mastery in Europe and elsewhere, the Slavonic and Teutonic.

The unexpected development of the crisis had taken French statesmen by surprise. The two foremost men of France, indeed, were not then in the country at all. Some days previously M. Poincaré, the President, had undertaken a journey to Russia, and was reviewing 60,000 Russian troops on the day the Austrian Note was delivered at Belgrade. He was accompanied on his visit to the Tsar by the Prime Minister, M. Viviani; but the tension which had so suddenly arisen in Central Europe brought the festivities at St. Petersburg to an end, and both statesmen hurried back to Paris by sea.

On July 24th, M. Sazonoff, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, telephoned to the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg, Sir G. Buchanan, asking him to call. M. Sazonoff then communicated to the Ambassador the text of the Austrian ultimatum, saying at the same time that "Austria's conduct was both provocative and immoral; she would never have taken such action unless Germany had first been consulted." He added that France would fulfil all the obligations entailed by her alliance with Russia, if necessity arose, and he hoped that the English

Government "would not fail to proclaim their solidarity with Russia and France."

In reply to the Minister, Sir G. Buchanan pointed out that England had no direct interests in Servia, to which M. Sazonoff answered that the general European question was involved. Sir George then suggested that perhaps the British Government would be willing "to make strong representations to both the German and Austrian Governments, urging upon them that an attack upon Austria by Servia would endanger the whole peace of Europe." In his telegram of July 24th, to Sir Edward Grey containing these statements he added: "President of French Republic and President of the Council cannot reach France, on their return from Russia, for four or five days; and it looks as though Austria purposely chose this moment to present their ultimatum."

On July 24th, Mr. D. Crackanthorpe, British *Chargé d'Affaires* at Belgrade, announced Servia's attitude in the following telegram to Sir Edward Grey:

Belgrade,
July 24th, 1914.

AUSTRIAN demands are considered absolutely unacceptable by Servian Government, who earnestly trust that His Majesty's Government may see their way to induce Austrian Government to moderate them.

This request was conveyed to me by Servian Prime Minister, who returned early this morning to Belgrade. His Excellency is dejected, and is clearly very anxious as to developments that may arise.

On the same day the German Ambassador in London, Prince Lichnowsky, communicated to Sir Edward Grey a Note from his Government. The Note emphasised the character of the Servian agitation, underlined the essential parts of the Austrian ultimatum, and spoke of Count Berchtold's demands as "equitable and moderate." It was clearly enough set forth that Austria's action had the unhesitating approval of the German Government.

In order that Sir Francis Bertie, the British Ambassador in Paris, might be kept fully informed of what was going on in London and in the other Capitals, Sir Edward Grey wrote to him on July 24th saying that he had seen M. Cambon (the French Ambassador), that he was about to see the German Ambassador, and that he would propose to the latter that, with the object of exercising moderating influence, Germany, France, Italy, and Great Britain, who had no direct interests in Servia, should act together in Vienna and St. Petersburg. M. Cambon, Sir Edward added, had pointed out that it would be too late to act after Austria had once moved against Servia.

The following telegram from Sir Edward Grey to Sir H. Rumbold, Councillor of Embassy at Berlin, explains the British attitude at this date:

Foreign Office,
July 24th, 1914.

GERMAN Ambassador has communicated to me the view of the German Government about the Austrian demand in Servia. I understand the German Government is making the same communication to the Powers.

I said that if the Austrian ultimatum to Servia did not lead to trouble between Austria and Russia I had no concern with it; I had heard nothing yet from St. Petersburg, but I was very apprehensive of the view Russia would take of the situation. I reminded the German Ambassador that some days ago he had expressed a personal hope that if need arose I would endeavour to exercise moderating influence at St. Petersburg, but now I said that, in view of the extraordinarily stiff character of the Austrian note, the shortness of the time allowed, and the wide scope of the demands upon Servia, I felt quite helpless so far as Russia was concerned, and I did not believe any Power could exercise influence alone.

The only chance I could see of mediating or moderating influence being effective, was that the four Powers, Germany, Italy, France, and ourselves, should work together simultaneously at Vienna and St. Petersburg in favour of moderation in the event of the relations between Austria and Russia becoming threatening.

The immediate danger was that in a few hours Austria might march into Servia and Russian Slav opinion demand that Russia should march to help Servia; it would be very desirable to get Austria not to precipitate military action and so to gain more time. But none of us could influence Austria in this direction unless Germany would propose and participate in such action at Vienna. You should inform Secretary of State.

Prince Lichnowsky said that Austria might be expected to move when the time limit expired unless Servia could give unconditional acceptance of Austrian demands *in toto*. Speaking privately, his Excellency suggested that a negative reply must in no case be returned by Servia; a reply favourable on some points must be sent at once, so that an excuse against immediate action might be afforded to Austria.

CHAPTER III

Russian Intervention—Dr. Dillon's Views—Servia's Reply

The next step was a telegram sent by M. Sazonoff to Prince Kudachef, Russian *Chargé d'Affaires* at Vienna, on July 11/24, instructing him to urge upon the Austrian Government the advisability of allowing Servia more time in which to reply.

On the following day Sir Edward Grey telegraphed to Sir F. Bertie and to Sir G. N. Buchanan stating that the Austrian Ambassador had explained to him that the step taken at Belgrade was not an ultimatum, but a *démarché* with a time-limit.

A telegram from Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey on July 25th gave the substance of an interview which the British Ambassador had had with the Russian Foreign Minister. In the course of his despatch Sir G. Buchanan said, summarising a statement made by M. Sazonoff:

> If Servia should appeal to the Powers, Russia would be quite ready to stand aside and leave the question in the hands of France, England, Germany and Italy. . . . On my expressing the earnest hope that Russia would not precipitate war by mobilising until you had had time to use your influence in favour

of peace, His Excellency assured me that Russia had no aggressive intentions, and she would take no action until it was forced on her. Austria's action was in reality directed against Russia. She aimed at overthrowing the present *status quo* in the Balkans, and establishing her own hegemony there. . . . If we took our stand firmly by France and Russia, there would be no war. If we failed them now, rivers of blood would flow, and we would in the end be dragged into the war. I said that England could play the rôle of mediator at Berlin and Vienna to better purpose as friend who, if her counsels of moderation were disregarded, might one day be converted into an ally, than if she were to declare herself Russia's ally at once. His Excellency said that unfortunately Germany was convinced that she could count upon our neutrality.

In reply to Sir Edward Grey's telegram of July 24th, Sir Horace Rumbold wired that he had seen the German Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who assured him that "the last thing Germany wanted was a general war, and he would do all in his power to prevent such a calamity."

Sir Rennell Rodd, British Ambassador in Rome, telegraphed on July 25th:

Rome,

July 25th, 1914.

I SAW the Secretary-General this morning and found that he knew of the suggestion that France, Italy, Germany, and ourselves should work at Vienna and St. Petersburg in favour of moderation if the relations between Austria and Servia become menacing.

In his opinion Austria will only be restrained by

the unconditional acceptance by the Servian Government of her note. There is reliable information that Austria intends to seize the Salonica Railway.

And on the same day fresh light was thrown on the Austrian designs by the following despatch from Sir Maurice de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey:

Vienna,
July 25th, 1914.

LANGUAGE of Press this morning leaves the impression that the surrender of Servia is neither expected nor really desired. It is officially announced that the Austrian Minister is instructed to leave Belgrade with staff of legation failing unconditional acceptance of note at 6 p.m. to-day.

Minister for Foreign Affairs goes to Ischl to-day to communicate personally to the Emperor Servian reply when it comes.

In the afternoon of July 25th Mr. Crackanthorpe telegraphed:

Belgrade,
July 25th, 1914.

THE Council of Ministers are now drawing up their reply to the Austrian note. I am informed by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that it will be most conciliatory and will meet the Austrian demands in as large a measure as is possible.

The following is a brief summary of the projected reply:

The Servian Government consent to the publication of a declaration in the *Official Gazette*. The ten points are accepted with reservations. Servian Government declare themselves ready to agree to a mixed commission of enquiry so long as the appointment of the commission can be shown to be in accordance with

international usage. They consent to dismiss and prosecute those officers who can be clearly proved to be guilty, and they have already arrested the officer referred to in the Austrian note. They are prepared to suppress the Narodna Odbrana.

The Servian Government consider that, unless the Austrian Government want war at any cost, they cannot but be content with the full satisfaction offered in the Servian reply.

In the evening, as the Austrian Note had not been agreed to unconditionally, he had to supplement his first telegram with the following ominous message:

Belgrade,
July 25th, 1914.

THE Austrian Minister left at 6.30.

The Government has left for Nish, where the Skuptchina will meet on Monday. I am leaving with my other colleagues, but the vice-consul is remaining in charge of the archives.

In reply to Sir G. Buchanan's message already quoted, Sir Edward Grey wired:

Foreign Office,
July 25th, 1914.

YOU spoke quite rightly in very difficult circumstances as to the attitude of His Majesty's Government. I entirely approve what you said, as reported in your telegram of yesterday, and I cannot promise more on behalf of the Government.

I do not consider that public opinion here would or ought to sanction our going to war over a Servian quarrel. If, however, war does take place, the development of other issues may draw us into it, and I am therefore anxious to prevent it.

The sudden, brusque, and peremptory character

of the Austrian *démarche* makes it almost inevitable that in a very short time both Russia and Austria will have mobilised against each other. In this event, the only chance of peace, in my opinion, is for the other four Powers to join in asking the Austrian and Russian Governments not to cross the frontier, and to give time for the four Powers acting at Vienna and St. Petersburg to try and arrange matters. If Germany will adopt this view, I feel strongly that France and ourselves should act upon it. Italy would no doubt gladly co-operate.

No diplomatic intervention or mediation would be tolerated by either Russia or Austria unless it was clearly impartial and included the allies or friends of both. The co-operation of Germany would, therefore, be essential.

The information in the following telegram from Sir Edward Grey to Sir Horace Rumbold appeared to indicate that Austria was, for the time being, holding back from extreme measures:

Foreign Office,
July 25th, 1914.

THE Austrian Ambassador has been authorised to inform me that the Austrian method of procedure on expiry of the time limit would be to break off diplomatic relations and commence military preparations, but not military operations. In informing the German Ambassador of this, I said that it interposed a stage of mobilisation before the frontier was actually crossed, which I had urged yesterday should be delayed.

Apparently we should now soon be face to face with the mobilisation of Austria and Russia. The only chance of peace, if this did happen, would be for Germany, France, Russia, and ourselves to keep

together, and to join in asking Austria and Russia not to cross the frontier till we had had time to try and arrange matters between them.

The German Ambassador read me a telegram from the German Foreign Office saying that his Government had not known beforehand, and had had no more than other Powers to do with the stiff terms of the Austrian note to Servia, but that once she had launched that note, Austria could not draw back. Prince Lichnowsky said, however, that if what I contemplated was mediation between Austria and Russia, Austria might be able with dignity to accept it. He expressed himself as personally favourable to this suggestion.

I concurred in his observation, and said that I felt I had no title to intervene between Austria and Servia, but as soon as the question became one as between Austria and Russia, the peace of Europe was affected, in which we must all take a hand.

I impressed upon the Ambassador that, in the event of Russian and Austrian mobilisation, the participation of Germany would be essential to any diplomatic action for peace. Alone we could do nothing. The French Government were travelling at the moment, and I had had no time to consult them, and could not therefore be sure of their views, but I was prepared, if the German Government agreed with my suggestion, to tell the French Government that I thought it the right thing to act upon it.

Prince Kudachef's request to the Austrian Government that Servia should be allowed another forty-eight hours in which to reply was refused; and, although no official statements were made in the various capitals, it became evident to the public that the Austro-Servian dispute was not, unfortunately, likely to be localised. On Monday,

July 27th, the war fever had spread everywhere—through Russia, Austria, Germany and France. There was indignation in Copenhagen because all the divisions of the German fleet had been ordered to assemble at various points off the Danish and Norwegian coast. At Brussels, orders were given to prepare for a general mobilisation—that fateful mobilisation which, to the gratified astonishment of western Europe, did so much to check the German advance for more than a week, and that at a time when every hour was of value to the forces of the Kaiser.

Referring to his announcement that the German Ambassador had called on the acting Premier, the Paris correspondent of the *Telegraph* said:

Divested of diplomatic circumlocutions, Baron von Schoen's communication meant: "If France and England do not stop Russia intervening against Austria, the Triple Alliance will declare war on the Triple Entente." The aggravation of this extraordinary communication of Baron von Schoen was that it was made first of all to France only on Friday. I am informed on the best authority that it was made subsequently, that is to say, yesterday (July 25th) to the English Foreign Office also. But the fact remains that the communication was made to the French Foreign Office first, and that is the most serious feature about it. . . . I may add that Baron von Schoen's first communication was so strange that there was some idea, to begin with, of his having acted, to a certain extent, on his own authority and without instructions. This is not the case. Baron von Schoen, on the contrary, is known to be a diplomatist of much prudence and tact. He acted on full instructions from Wilhelmstrasse. The implication

contained in Baron von Schoen's Verbal Note was that France was to be held as a hostage for the non-intervention of Russia.

The same writer also sounded a warning diplomatic note:

All Europe to-day is involved in the gravest crisis known in this generation. I speak with full knowledge and some authority. I cannot say all that I know, or specify from whom my knowledge is derived. But I repeat that this is the gravest situation known by the present French generation—that is to say, since the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. I have consulted to-day in French official quarters and in foreign diplomatic circles in Paris. All views tally only too well. "There are chances left for peace," I was told in a French quarter. This I am bound to say was the most optimistic opinion I heard.

I do not want, and I should not consent, to be an alarmist. But even when one measures one's words as carefully as possible, one has to say that the present European crisis is much more dangerous than, for instance, that which followed the coup d'Agadir or—to go much further back—that which concerned France and Germany over the Schnaebele incident. One hesitates to write the word war; for this would be a war such as has never been known before; but one has to do it.

It is difficult to make the real significance of impressions felt. All I can say is that I have never before obtained from certain French official quarters so complete an impression of a critical situation in Europe and of resolution in France. The perusal of the French Press gives no idea of the real gravity of the situation. I have known many occasions on which the French Press and the Press of other countries also was Cassandra-like and French diplomacy

was cool and cheerful. French diplomacy is cool; but I am bound to say that it is not cheerful.

The following are the main points in the situation in French official opinion. Two chances of peace have gone, to begin with. Servia might have submitted entirely. Alternatively, Austria-Hungary might have accepted Servia's qualified surrender. Neither thing happened. The rupture between Austria-Hungary and Servia is an accomplished fact. In about a couple of days, let us say by Tuesday or Wednesday, the question of peace or general war in Europe will be decided. Until Austria-Hungary invades Servian territory the path of negotiation will be open. If Austria-Hungary invades Servian territory by Tuesday it is "inconceivable that Russia will not intervene."

I had this opinion not only from French but from foreign diplomatic quarters in Paris. "When Russia intervenes against Austria, then *la parole sera à l'Allemagne*"—which means of course that France and England will have their say also.

The whole point of the situation, and the whole danger of the situation, is this. Throughout the crisis of the Balkan war it was believed, and I think rightly believed, that European peace was preserved largely by the fact that a war arising out of Austrian plans of conquest upon the Southern Slavs was not at all the war that the German Empire wanted. Up till a day or two ago competent observers held the same opinion. To-day that opinion has changed. It is impossible to avoid, and the French Government does not avoid, drawing the conclusion that the present crisis is the result of a deliberately planned scheme.

The assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife was committed some four weeks ago. The Austrian move now is made at the precise

moment that the President of the French Republic and the French Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs are cruising in Scandinavian waters, and at the precise moment that the Conference summoned by the King about Ulster fails.

Austria-Hungary combined the move with Germany. All authorities whom I saw considered it unthinkable that she should have acted as she has unless definitely and completely backed by the German Empire. If that be so, then the move is a German move, and the alternative prospect is a general European war or a humiliation of the Triple Entente. This theory was put to me to-day by a foreign diplomatist in Paris:

"The German Emperor thinks that the moment has come to strike a decisive blow. Russia is making strenuous efforts, but is not ready. France is not quite ready; but is making equally strenuous efforts. The allied Balkan States are still worn out by their war. In a few years, say three or four, their combination will amount to a formidable Power, dangerous to Austria-Hungary."

On July 27th also Mr. Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, returned to London from Overstrand, where he had been spending the week-end.

At midnight the Admiralty issued the following statement:

Orders have been given to the First Fleet, which is concentrated at Portland, not to disperse for manœuvre leave for the present.

All vessels of the Second Fleet are remaining at their home ports in proximity to their balance crews.

In addition, it was announced in Copenhagen that in consequence of the crisis the German

Emperor had shortened his stay in Norway, and was expected to pass through Danish waters on the following day, on his way home.

Further, Dr. Dillon telegraphed from Vienna on Sunday, July 26th, the following important message:

During the forty-eight hours which have elapsed after the communication of the Austrian Note to King Peter's Government the diplomacy of the Entente Powers has been on an entirely wrong tack. It misapprehends the pith of the quarrel between the two States. Assuming that the subject of dispute is the assassination of the Archduke and his consort and the moral and political obligations which that crime, born of Pan-Servian propaganda, imposes on the Belgrade Cabinet, it grounded its demand for a longer period for reflection upon the harshness of certain of the conditions laid down, and upon the consequent need of bringing friendly pressure to bear upon King Peter's Ministers to induce them to give favourable consideration to Austria's legitimate requirements. Now, Austrian statesmen regard these conditions merely as means to the end, not as the end itself, which may be defined as a radical and permanent change of attitude on the part of the Servian Government and nation towards Austria-Hungary.

I am accurately expounding the view taken by the Austrian Emperor's responsible advisers when I affirm that if that object could be secured by a spontaneous, sincere, and credible declaration, accompanied with corresponding acts of the Servian Government and people, the nine demands embodied in the Note would be withdrawn unhesitatingly. What was demanded at the outset was a change of spirit, manifesting itself in a transformation of Pan-Slavist

policy and an abandonment of all endeavours to further that policy, and as that request, preferred during the past eighteen months, has not been complied with, the obnoxious conditions were devised for the purpose of achieving the results which spontaneous acquiescence in it would have brought forth.

General stress is laid on the fact that an acceptance of the note by Servia would have been "a false peace," and that war would only then have been postponed, to be carried out later under conditions which would have been much less propitious for the Monarchy than those of to-day. The manner in which Servia officially informed Baron Giesl that she refused the Note has called forth great embitterment. Still, as late as yesterday afternoon, at three p.m., the special correspondents at present in Belgrade for the Vienna and for the Hungarian Press were informed by official personages that Servia saw herself forced to accept the conditions imposed upon her by the Monarchy, and that therefore there would be no war.

At six p.m., at the appointed term, the Prime Minister, M. Pasitch, visited Baron Giesl, and handed him a long note. After reading the same, the Minister declared that it was insufficient, and that he must therefore immediately break off diplomatic relations with the Servian Government, and leave Belgrade with his legation. Half an hour later the Minister left Belgrade with his people. Before this he had learnt that already, at three p.m.—thus at the instant when the Servian Press Bureau had told the foreign journalists that the situation was peacable—a mobilisation order to the Servian army had been issued. Also the official *Samouprava* published an article yesterday afternoon, which indicated that the Austrian Note would be accepted.

Journals here say to-day that Servia at this serious

moment showed her whole deceitfulness and reserve in giving peaceable assurances at a moment when it was already resolved to go to war. The news from Belgrade that a change in feeling first occurred when a telegram of 2,000 words reached M. Pasitch from St. Petersburg, is not credited here.

Austria's contention therefore is that Servia can answer in forty-eight hours, or even one hour, whether she is minded or no to adopt the prescribed attitude towards the Dual Monarchy. If she were thus willing and could convince her neighbour of this readiness, then the nine demands need not stand as stumbling blocks in the way.

As I have explained, the assassination of the Archduke and the greater or lesser degree of indirect responsibility for this crime which may be ascribed to Servia's public men are matters which touch but the fringe of the question. The real issue lies much deeper than the events of the last few weeks. It is of long standing, and has been submitted time and again to the Servian Government and people, who are therefore deemed to be in possession of all the requisite data for coming to a definite decision. Hence the probable refusal with which the Austrian Emperor's Ministers will meet such requests by one or all of the Entente Powers. The German Government was kept accurately and fully posted well in advance by reason of the far-reaching practical decisions which the sequel of this action might suddenly and peremptorily oblige her to take.

All the deliberation, therefore, on the Note and the contingent necessity of following it up in ways unwelcome to both allies, but unavoidable in certain circumstances, took place beforehand, and, together with it, the requisite diplomatic and military measures were adopted by the statesmen of Vienna and Buda-Pesth before any overt action was undertaken.

Vigilant attention was paid to the choice of a propitious moment.

It was a moment when the sympathies of Europe were with the Austro-Hungarian people, whose Sovereign-designate was cruelly slain by political assassins from Servia at the instigation of men who occupied posts as public servants there. It was a moment when the French nation, impressed by revelations made in the Senate respecting its inadequate preparedness for war, appears less than ever minded to take any diplomatic action which might lead to a breach of the peace. It was a moment when the cares of the British Government are absorbed in forecasting and preparing for the fateful consequences of its internal policy, which may, it is apprehended, culminate in civil war. It was a moment when the President and Foreign Secretary of the French Republic were absent in Russia, drinking toasts to the peace of Europe, and celebrating the concord and brotherhood of the French and Russian peoples. It was a moment when Russia herself is confronted with a problem of revolutionary strikes, which, it is assumed, would set in with oceanic violence if that empire were to embark in war with the Central European Powers.

Finally, it was the moment after Servia's friend and mentor, M. de Hartwig, the Russian Minister in Belgrade, had been called to his last account, and King Peter's Ministers were obliged to come to a decision on the merits of the case alone, without M. de Hartwig's counsel, and without being able to reckon with confidence upon any backing, military or even diplomatic.

To imagine, therefore, that the Austro-Hungarian statesmen would deliberately throw away any of the advantages offered by this complex of favourable conditions would be to credit them with a degree

of *naïveté* uncommon among public men. The object which the Austrian Emperor's Ministers had in view when presenting the Note was precisely to elicit a refusal or acceptance pure and simple, not to wrangle about the wording of conditions or diplomatic formulas. The average man in the Dual Monarchy was afraid that the reply might be an acquiescence, and he said so. His hope, which never hardened into belief, was that Baron Giesl would receive a *non possumus* for his answer.

The official Servian point of view at this time is seen from the following letter, which was addressed by Sir Edward Grey to Mr. Crackanthorpe:

Foreign Office,
July 25th, 1914.

THE Servian Minister called on the 23rd instant and spoke to Sir A. Nicolson on the present strained relations between Servia and Austria-Hungary.

He said that his Government were most anxious and disquieted. They were perfectly ready to meet any reasonable demands of Austria-Hungary so long as such demands were kept on the "*terrain juridique.*" If the results of the enquiry at Serajevo—an enquiry conducted with so much mystery and secrecy—disclosed the fact that there were any individuals conspiring or organising plots on Servian territory, the Servian Government would be quite ready to take the necessary steps to give satisfaction; but if Austria transported the question on to the political ground, and said that Servian policy, being inconvenient to her, must undergo a radical change, and that Servia must abandon certain political ideals, no independent State would, or could, submit to such dictation.

He mentioned that both the assassins of the Archduke were Austrian subjects—Bosniaks; that one of them had been in Servia, and that the Servian authorities, considering him suspect and dangerous, had desired to expel him, but on applying to the Austrian authorities found that the latter protected him, and said that he was an innocent and harmless individual.

Sir A. Nicolson, on being asked by M. Boschovitch his opinion on the whole question, observed that there were no data on which to base one, though it was to be hoped that the Servian Government would endeavour to meet the Austrian demands in a conciliatory and moderate spirit.

On the same day the following telegram was received from Sir Maurice de Bunsen:

Vienna,
July 25th, 1914.

SERVIAN reply to the Austro-Hungarian demands is not considered satisfactory, the Austro-Hungarian Minister has left Belgrade. War is thought to be imminent.

That the Austrians had cherished over-optimistic hopes regarding the attitude which the Russian Government would be likely to adopt is seen from a later telegram of Sir Maurice de Bunsen:

Vienna,
July 26th, 1914.

ACCORDING to confident belief of German Ambassador, Russia will keep quiet during chastisement of Servia, which Austria-Hungary is resolved to inflict, having received assurances that no Servian territory will be annexed by Austria-Hungary. In

reply to my question whether Russian Government might not be compelled by public opinion to intervene on behalf of kindred nationality, he said that everything depended on the personality of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who could resist easily, if he chose, the pressure of a few newspapers. He pointed out that the days of Pan-Slav agitation in Russia were over and that Moscow was perfectly quiet. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs would not, his Excellency thought, be so imprudent as to take a step which would probably result in many frontier questions in which Russia is interested, such as Swedish, Polish, Ruthene, Roumanian, and Persian questions being brought into the melting-pot. France, too, was not at all in a condition for facing a war.

I replied that matters had, I thought, been made a little difficult for other Powers by the tone of Austro-Hungarian Government's ultimatum to Servia. One naturally sympathised with many of the requirements of the ultimatum, if only the manner of expressing them had been more temperate. It was, however, impossible, according to the German Ambassador, to speak effectively in any other way to Servia. Servia was about to receive a lesson which she required; the quarrel, however, ought not to be extended in any way to foreign countries. He doubted Russia, who had no right to assume a protectorate over Servia, acting as if she made any such claim. As for Germany, she knew very well what she was about in backing up Austria-Hungary in this matter.

The German Ambassador had heard of a letter addressed by you yesterday to the German Ambassador in London in which you expressed the hope that the Servian concessions would be regarded as satisfactory. He asked whether I had been informed

that a pretence of giving way at the last moment had been made by the Servian Government. I had, I said, heard that on practically every point Servia had been willing to give in. His Excellency replied that Servian concessions were all a sham. Servia proved that she well knew that they were insufficient to satisfy the legitimate demands of Austria-Hungary by the fact that before making her offer she had ordered mobilisation and retirement of Government from Belgrade.

On July 26th, after the sudden return of the Emperor, the German Government drew back from mediation. Their revised attitude was explained by Sir H. Rumbold in a message to Sir Edward Grey :

Berlin,

July 26th, 1914.

UNDER-SECRETARY of State for Foreign Affairs has just telephoned to me to say that German Ambassador at Vienna has been instructed to pass on to Austro-Hungarian Government your hopes that they may take a favourable view of Servian reply if it corresponds to the forecast contained in Belgrade telegram No. 52 of 25th July. [*i.e.*, Mr. Crackanthorpe's summary of the Servian reply, already quoted.]

Under-Secretary of State considers very fact of their making this communication to Austro-Hungarian Government implies that they associate themselves to a certain extent with your hope. German Government do not see their way to going beyond this.

On the other hand, so far as Italy was concerned the prospects appeared to be brighter. On July

26th Sir Rennell Rodd telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey:

Rome,
July 26th, 1914.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs welcomes your proposal for a conference, and will instruct Italian Ambassador to-night accordingly.

Austrian Ambassador has informed Italian Government this evening that Minister in Belgrade had been recalled, but that this did not imply declaration of war.

In the White Paper this message is followed by one from Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, Sir H. Rumbold, and Sir R. Rodd:

Foreign Office,
July 26th, 1914.

WOULD Minister for Foreign Affairs be disposed to instruct Ambassador here to join with representatives of France, Italy, and Germany, and myself to meet here in conference immediately for the purpose of discovering an issue which would prevent complications? You should ask Minister for Foreign Affairs whether he would do this. If so, when bringing the above suggestion to the notice of the Governments to which they are accredited, representatives at Belgrade, Vienna, and St. Petersburg should be authorised to request that all active military operations should be suspended pending results of conference.

We next have the official Servian reply to Austria. The complete English version, from which it will be seen that practically all Austria's demands were accepted with a view to safeguarding peace, is as under:

THE Royal Servian Government have received the

communication of the Imperial and Royal Government of the 10th instant, and are convinced that their reply will remove any misunderstanding which may threaten to impair the good neighbourly relations between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the Kingdom of Servia.

Conscious of the fact that the protests which were made both from the tribune of the national Skuptchina and in the declarations and actions of the responsible representatives of the State—protests which were cut short by the declarations made by the Servian Government on the 18th March, 1909—have not been renewed on any occasion as regards the great neighbouring Monarchy, and that no attempt has been made since that time, either by the successive Royal Governments or by their organs, to change the political and legal state of affairs created in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Royal Government draw attention to the fact that in this connection the Imperial and Royal Government have made no representation except one concerning a school book, and that on that occasion the Imperial and Royal Government received an entirely satisfactory explanation. Servia has several times given proofs of her pacific and moderate policy during the Balkan crisis, and it is thanks to Servia and to the sacrifice that she has made in the exclusive interest of European peace that that peace has been preserved. The Royal Government cannot be held responsible for manifestations of a private character, such as articles in the Press and the peaceable work of societies—manifestations which take place in nearly all countries in the ordinary course of events, and which as a general rule escape official control. The Royal Government are all the less responsible in view of the fact that at the time of the solution of a series of questions which arose between Servia and Austria-Hungary they gave

proof of a great readiness to oblige, and thus succeeded in settling the majority of these questions to the advantage of the two neighbouring countries.

For these reasons the Royal Government have been pained and surprised at the statements according to which members of the Kingdom of Servia are supposed to have participated in the preparations for the crime committed at Serajevo ; the Royal Government expected to be invited to collaborate in an investigation of all that concerns this crime, and they were ready, in order to prove the entire correctness of their attitude, to take measures against any persons concerning whom representations were made to them. Falling in, therefore, with the desire of the Imperial and Royal Government, they are prepared to hand over for trial any Servian subject, without regard to his situation or rank, of whose complicity in the crime of Serajevo proofs are forthcoming, and more especially they undertake to cause to be published on the first page of the *Journal Officiel*, on the date of the 13th (26th) July, the following declaration :

" The Royal Government of Servia condemn all propaganda which may be directed against Austria-Hungary, that is to say, all such tendencies as aim at ultimately detaching from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy territories which form part thereof, and they sincerely deplore the baneful consequences of these criminal movements. The Royal Government regret that, according to the communication from the Imperial and Royal Government, certain Servian officers and officials should have taken part in the above-mentioned propaganda, and thus compromised the good neighbourly relations to which the Royal Servian Government was solemnly engaged by the declaration of March 31st, 1909, which declaration disapproves and repudiates all idea or attempt at interference with the destiny of the inhabitants of

any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, and they consider it their duty formally to warn the officers, officials, and entire population of the kingdom that henceforth they will take the most rigorous steps against all such persons as are guilty of such acts, to prevent and to repress which they will use their utmost endeavour."

This declaration will be brought to the knowledge of the Royal Army in an order of the day, in the name of His Majesty the King by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Alexander, and will be published in the next official army bulletin.

The Royal Government further undertake:

1. To introduce at the first regular convocation of the Skupshtina a provision into the Press law providing for the most severe punishment of incitement to hatred or contempt of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and for taking action against any publication the general tendency of which is directed against the territorial integrity of Austria-Hungary. The Government engage at the approaching revision of the Constitution to cause an amendment to be introduced into article 22 of the Constitution of such a nature that such publication may be confiscated, a proceeding at present impossible under the categorical terms of article 22 of the Constitution.

2. The Government possess no proof, nor does the note of the Imperial and Royal Government furnish them with any, that the "Narodna Odbrana" and other similar societies have committed up to the present any criminal act of this nature through the proceedings of any of their members. Nevertheless, the Royal Government will accept the demand of the Imperial and Royal Government, and will dissolve the "Narodna Odbrana" Society and every other society which may be directing its efforts against Austria-Hungary.

3. The Royal Servian Government undertake to remove without delay from their public educational establishments in Servia all that serves or could serve to foment propaganda against Austria-Hungary, whenever the Imperial and Royal Government furnish them with facts and proofs of these propaganda.

4. The Royal Government also agree to remove from military service all such persons as the judicial enquiry may have proved to be guilty of acts directed against the integrity of the territory of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and they expect the Imperial and Royal Government to communicate to them at a later date the names and the acts of these officers and officials for the purposes of the proceedings which are to be taken against them.

5. The Royal Government must confess that they do not clearly grasp the meaning or the scope of the demand made by the Imperial and Royal Government that Servia shall undertake to accept the collaboration of the organs of the Imperial and Royal Government upon their territory, but they declare that they will admit such collaboration as agrees with the principle of international law, with criminal procedure, and with good neighbourly relations.

6. It goes without saying that the Royal Government consider it their duty to open an enquiry against all such persons as are, or eventually may be, implicated in the plot of the 15th June, and who happen to be within the territory of the kingdom. As regards the participation in this enquiry of Austro-Hungarian agents or authorities appointed for this purpose by the Imperial and Royal Government, the Royal Government cannot accept such an arrangement, as it would be a violation of the Constitution and of the law of criminal procedure; nevertheless, in concrete cases communications as to

the results of the investigation in question might be given to the Austro-Hungarian agents.

7. The Royal Government proceeded, on the very evening of the delivery of the Note, to arrest Commandant Voislav Tankossitch. As regards Milan Ziganovitch, who is a subject of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, and who up to 15th June was employed (on probation) by the directorate of railways, it has not yet been possible to arrest him.

The Austro-Hungarian Government are requested to be so good as to supply as soon as possible, in the customary form, the presumptive evidence of guilt, as well as the eventual proofs of guilt which have been collected up to the present, at the enquiry at Serajevo for the purpose of the latter enquiry.

8. The Servian Government will reinforce and extend the measures which have been taken for preventing the illicit traffic of arms and explosives across the frontier. It goes without saying that they will immediately order an enquiry and will severely punish the frontier officials on the Schabatz-Loznitza line who have failed in their duty and allowed the authors of the crime of Serajevo to pass.

9. The Royal Government will gladly give explanations of the remarks made by their officials, whether in Servia or abroad, in interviews after the crime and which according to the statement of the Imperial and Royal Government were hostile towards the Monarchy, as soon as the Imperial and Royal Government have communicated to them the passages in question in these remarks, and as soon as they have shown that the remarks were actually made by the said officials, although the Royal Government will itself take steps to collect evidence and proofs.

10. The Royal Government will inform the Imperial and Royal Government of the execution of the measures comprised under the above heads, in so far

as this has not already been done by the present note, as soon as each measure has been ordered and carried out.

If the Imperial and Royal Government are not satisfied with this reply, the Servian Government, considering that it is not to the common interest to precipitate the solution of this question, are ready, as always, to accept a pacific understanding, either by referring this question to the decision of the International Tribunal of The Hague, or to the Great Powers which took part in the drawing up of the declaration made by the Servian Government on 18th (31st) March, 1909.

Belgrade,
July 12 (25), 1914.

CHAPTER IV

Comments on the Servian Reply—Count Mensdorff and Sir Edward Grey—Telegrams from St. Petersburg.

This reply, and Sir Edward Grey's proposal for a Conference, which has been made public, had a mixed reception. In some quarters, particularly in England and Italy, it was believed that some means would be found of averting the catastrophe of a European war and that the Austrian Government could not reasonably find fault with the Servian answer. The German papers, on the other hand, began a series of attacks on Russia and declared that if the peace of Europe were broken the onus would lie on the Tsar for having authorised a partial mobilisation of the army. What Austria thought of the reply was made known in a Reuter telegram from Vienna, sent on Monday, July 27th:

The following communiqué embodying the Austro-Hungarian semi-official view of the attitude adopted by Servia is published here:

"Baron Giesl, the Austro-Hungarian Minister in Belgrade, presented the Servian Note in reply to our claim to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on his arrival in Vienna yesterday. The object of this Note is to create the false impression that the Servian Government is prepared in a great measure to comply with

our demands. As a matter of fact, however, the Note is filled with the spirit of dishonesty which clearly lets it be seen that the Servian Government is not seriously determined to put an end to the culpable tolerance it has hitherto extended to the intrigues against the Monarchy.

"The Servian Note contains such far-reaching reservations and limitations, not only in regard to the general principles of our *démarche*, but also in regard to the individual claims which we have put forward, that the concessions actually made become insignificant. In particular our demand for the participation of the Austro-Hungarian authorities in the investigations to detect the accomplices in the conspiracy on Servian territory has been rejected. Our request that measures should be taken against that section of the Press which is hostile to Austria-Hungary has been declined, and our wish that the Servian Government should take the necessary measures to prevent the dissolved Austrophobe associations from continuing their activity under another name and in another form has not even been considered at all.

"Since the claims contained in the Austrian Note of July 23rd, regard being had to the attitude hitherto adopted by Servia, represent the minimum of what is necessary for the establishment of a permanent peace in the south-eastern monarchy, the Servian answer must be regarded as unsatisfactory. That the Servian Government itself was conscious that its Note was not acceptable to us is proved by the circumstance that it proposes to us at the end of the Note to submit the dispute to arbitration, an invitation which is thrown into its proper light by the circumstance that three hours before the handing in of the Note, a few minutes before the expiry of the period, the mobilisation of the Servian army took place."

At the same time the Agency stated that it had received the following communication "from a well-informed Servian source":

There seems to be some improvement in the situation this morning. This is due to the fact that Russia has assumed such an energetic, decided, and yet calm attitude that in all probability her influence will avert war. We hope that Austria-Hungary will reconsider the situation, and in the interests of peace modify her demands in taking into account the consideration due to an independent State, and so avert war. If, however, Austria wants war, she will have seen that we are prepared to accept it in the interests of the dignity of our State.

The blame would, however, not rest with us. The world can now see that in our reply to the Austro-Hungarian Note we have shown every desire to meet the legitimate demands of Austria-Hungary, and that, notwithstanding the language employed in that Note, we have complied with everything that does not impair our sovereign rights. Servia as a whole—political, social, military—views with the greatest horror and regret the dastardly and useless crime of Serajevo. One must remark:

1. That the assassin was an Austrian subject.

2. That he had been driven from his home in Herzegovina, and politically persecuted by the Austrian authorities.

3. That he was an idealistic and ill-balanced youth, and that his crime was not the outcome of any Servian propaganda.

According to the principle, "auditur et altera pars," it should be pointed out that there was an organised campaign, engineered by the Austro-Hungarian Press, showing the whole Servian policy

and character in a very partisan way, and intended to support and justify the Cæsarian and Imperialistic attitude of Austria-Hungary, and her keen desire to humiliate Servia in order to reduce the prestige that Servia has won on the battlefield, which prestige Austria regards as a menace to herself. As a result, public opinion has been misled by the unsupported, unproved, and one-sided statements emanating from Austria. Once the facts are known I feel perfectly confident that an entirely different light will be thrown on the situation, and that Servia will meet with the sympathy of disinterested Europe.

The above statement seems to have been made before the news arrived of the Servian attack on Austrian troops.

The last paragraph of the statement just quoted referred to a frontier skirmish and not to an actual outbreak of hostilities.

On this same Monday, July 27th, Sir Edward Grey made his first important statement in the House of Commons in connection with the crisis; and the Marquis of Crewe, in reply to Lord Lansdowne, made an almost similar statement in the House of Lords. Sir Edward said:

The House will of course be aware from the public Press of what the nature of the situation in Europe is at the present moment. I think it is due to the House that I should give in short narrative form the position which His Majesty's Government have so far taken up.

Last Friday morning I received from the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador the text of the communication made by the Austro-Hungarian Government to the Powers, which has appeared in the Press, and which

included textually the demand made by the Austro-Hungarian Government upon Servia.

In the afternoon, I saw other Ambassadors and expressed the view that, as long as the dispute was one between Austro-Hungary and Servia alone, I felt that we had no title to interfere, but that, if the relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia became threatening, the question would then be one of the peace of Europe, a matter that concerned us all.

I did not then know what view the Russian Government had taken of the situation, and without knowing how things were likely to develop, I could not make any immediate proposition; but I said that if relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia did become threatening the only chance of peace appeared to me to be that the four Powers, Germany, France, Italy, and Great Britain, who were not directly interested in the Servian question, should work together both in St. Petersburg and Vienna simultaneously to get both Austria-Hungary and Russia to suspend military operations while the four Powers endeavoured to arrange a settlement.

After I had heard that Austria-Hungary had broken off diplomatic relations with Servia, I made by telegraph yesterday afternoon the following proposal, as a practical method of applying the views that I had already expressed: I instructed His Majesty's Ambassadors in Paris, Berlin, and Rome, to ask the Governments to which they were accredited, whether they would be willing to arrange that the French, German, and Italian Ambassadors in London should meet me in a Conference to be held in London immediately to endeavour to find a means of arranging the present difficulties. At the same time, I instructed His Majesty's Ambassadors to ask those Governments to authorise their representatives in Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Belgrade to inform the Governments there

of the proposed Conference, and to ask them to suspend all active military operations pending the result of the Conference.

To that I have not yet received complete replies, and it is of course a proposal in which the co-operation of all four Powers is essential. In a crisis so grave as this, the efforts of one Power alone to preserve the peace must be quite ineffective.

The time allowed in this matter has been so short that I have had to take the risk of making a proposal without the usual preliminary steps of trying to ascertain whether it would be well received. But where matters are so grave and the time so short, the risk of proposing something that is unwelcome or ineffective cannot be avoided. I cannot but feel, however, assuming that the text of the Servian reply as published this morning in the Press is accurate, as I believe it to be, that it should at least provide a basis on which a friendly and impartial group of Powers, including Powers who are equally in the confidence of Austria-Hungary and of Russia, should be able to arrange a settlement that would be generally acceptable.

It must be obvious to any person who reflects upon the situation that the moment the dispute ceases to be one between Austria-Hungary and Servia, and becomes one in which another Great Power is involved it can but end in the greatest catastrophe that has ever befallen the Continent of Europe at one blow. No one can say what would be the limit of the issues that might be raised by such a conflict; the consequences of it, direct and indirect, would be incalculable.

MR. LAWSON asked whether it was true that that morning the German Emperor had accepted the principle of mediation which the right hon. gentleman had proposed.

Sir E. GREY—I understand that the German

Government are favourable to the idea of mediation in principle as between Austria-Hungary and Russia, but to the particular proposal of applying that principle by means of the Conference which I have described to the House I have not yet received a reply.

On July 28th publicity was given to an important article by a Diplomatic Correspondent which summed up the situation as it existed up to Monday night and added some further particulars regarding the negotiations :

The three important events of the moment are :

(1) The publication of the Servian Note.

(2) The delay of the Austrian declaration of war.

(3) The announcement made in the House of Commons by Sir Edward Grey that the four Powers which are not directly interested in the present crisis—Germany, Italy, France, and Great Britain, are to participate in an Ambassadors' Conference, which will meet in London, in order to evolve, if possible, a middle solution between the opposite points of view held by Austria and Russia as to the Servian question.

The impression caused by the Servian Note in diplomatic circles here is very favourable. It is admitted on nearly all hands that Servia has practically conceded all that the Dual Monarchy required. But she has met with a blunt refusal of further negotiations. In less than forty-five minutes the Austrian Minister in Belgrade, Baron Giesl, had time to read the Servian document—a very long one—to decide that

it did not afford a suitable basis for further pourparlers, to write a reply to M. Pasitch, and to embark in the train! These facts would suggest that on the Austrian side exists the wish to push things to extremes. On the other hand, no act of war has taken place so far, while it would be an easy matter for Austrian troops to cross the Danube. In some quarters it is concluded from this fact that perhaps the time is ripe for the mediation of the Powers.

As Sir Edward Grey admitted very openly, the proposal for an Ambassadors' Conference of the four Powers is still in the initial stage of its progress. France has accepted it, and while expressing some reserve as to the procedure to be followed, Italy is inclined to sanction it. But, so far, the assent of Germany has been given to the " principle " of mediation only, irrespective of the actual shape it would take.

At the present moment discussions are taking place between the Governments of the Triple Alliance. In the light of the latest developments they are reconsidering the decision arrived at between them in the course of the last few weeks. It is to be hoped that they will agree to alter them for the sake of general peace.

The main hopes of a peaceful settlement centre on Germany, and specially on the German Emperor. So far it is not known whether Germany has begun to exert her friendly pressure on her ally in Vienna. But yesterday she appeared to be distinctly more inclined to do it than she was on Saturday.

The order to the Fleet issued on Sunday night by Mr. Churchill, and the tone of the declarations of Sir E. Grey yesterday afternoon, have caused great satisfaction in France and in Russia.

On the same day, too, it was announced that

the German High Sea Fleet, which had been engaged in manœuvres, had been recalled to home waters.

On the 27th Sir Edward Grey received a telegram from Sir Maurice de Bunsen which had been sent off on July 26th. It stated that the Russian Ambassador there believed that the Austro-Hungarian Government had determined to go to war and that it would be useless to press for further time. On the 27th also the French Government officially notified its acceptance of the proposal for a Conference.

The German Government could not agree to the suggestion, a fact communicated to the British Foreign Minister in the following telegram from Sir E. Goschen :

Berlin,
July 27th, 1914.

Secretary of State says that conference you suggest would practically amount to a court of arbitration and could not, in his opinion, be called together except at the request of Austria and Russia. He could not therefore fall in with your suggestions, desirous though he was to co-operate for the maintenance of peace. I said I was sure that your idea had nothing to do with arbitration, but meant that representatives of the four nations not directly interested should discuss and suggest means for avoiding a dangerous situation. He maintained, however, that such a conference as you proposed was not practicable. He added that news he had just received from St. Petersburg showed that there was an intention on the part of M. de Sazanoff to exchange views with Count Berchtold. He thought that this method of procedure might lead to a satisfactory result, and

that it would be best, before doing anything else, to await outcome of the exchange of views between the Austrian and Russian Governments.

In the course of a short conversation Secretary of State said that as yet Austria was only partially mobilising, but that if Russia mobilised against Germany, latter would have to follow suit. I asked him what he meant by " mobilising against Germany." He said that if Russia only mobilised in south, Germany would not mobilise, but if she mobilised in north, Germany would have to do so too, and Russian system of mobilisation was so complicated that it might be difficult exactly to locate her mobilisation. Germany would therefore have to be very careful not to be taken by surprise.

Finally, Secretary of State said that news from St. Petersburg had caused him to take more hopeful view of the general situation.

On the same day the British Ambassador in St. Petersburg telegraphed as follows :

St. Petersburg,
July 27th, 1914.

AUSTRIAN Ambassador tried, in a long conversation which he had yesterday with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to explain away objectionable features of the recent action taken by the Austro-Hungarian Government. Minister for Foreign Affairs pointed out that, although he perfectly understood Austria's motives, the ultimatum had been so drafted that it could not possibly be accepted as a whole by the Servian Government. Although the demands were reasonable enough in some cases, others not only could not possibly be put into immediate execution seeing that they entailed revision of existing

Servian laws, but were, moreover, incompatible with Servia's dignity as an independent State. It would be useless for Russia to offer her good offices at Belgrade, in view of the fact that she was the object of such suspicion in Austria. In order, however, to put an end to the present tension, he thought that England and Italy might be willing to collaborate with Austria. The Austrian Ambassador undertook to communicate his Excellency's remarks to his Government.

On the Minister for Foreign Affairs questioning me, I told him that I had correctly defined the attitude of His Majesty's Government in my conversation with him, which I reported in my telegram of the 24th instant. I added that you could not promise to do anything more, and that his Excellency was mistaken if he believed that the cause of peace could be promoted by our telling the German Government that they would have to deal with us as well as with Russia and France if they supported Austria by force of arms. Their attitude would merely be stiffened by such a menace, and we could only induce her to use her influence at Vienna to avert war by approaching her in the capacity of a friend who was anxious to preserve peace. His Excellency must not, if our efforts were to be successful, do anything to precipitate a conflict. In these circumstances I trusted that the Russian Government would defer mobilisation ukase for as long as possible, and that troops would not be allowed to cross the frontier even when it was issued.

In reply the Minister for Foreign Affairs told me that until the issue of the Imperial ukase no effective steps towards mobilisation could be taken, and the Austro-Hungarian Government would profit by delay in order to complete her military preparations if it was deferred too long.

The Russian Minister subsequently suggested direct negotiation between his country and Austria as a means of arriving at a settlement. Sir G. Buchanan telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey as follows:

St. Petersburg,
July 27th, 1914.

SINCE my conversation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, as reported in my telegram of to-day, I understand that his Excellency has proposed that the modifications to be introduced into Austrian demands should be the subject of direct conversation between Vienna and St. Petersburg.

A telegram of the same date from Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen explains itself:

Foreign Office,
July 27th. 1914.

GERMAN Ambassador has informed me that German Government accept in principle mediation between Austria and Russia by the four Powers, reserving, of course, their right as an ally to help Austria if attacked. He has also been instructed to request me to use influence in St. Petersburg to localise the war and to keep up the peace of Europe.

I have replied that the Servian reply went farther than could have been expected to meet the Austrian demands. German Secretary of State has himself said that there were some things in the Austrian note that Servia could hardly be expected to accept. I assumed that Servian reply could not have gone as far as it did unless Russia had exercised conciliatory influence at Belgrade, and it was really at Vienna that moderating influence was now required. If

Austria put the Servian reply aside as being worth nothing and marched into Servia, it meant that she was determined to crush Servia at all costs, being reckless of the consequences that might be involved. Servian reply should at least be treated as a basis for discussion and pause. I said German Government should urge this at Vienna.

I recalled what German Government had said as to the gravity of the situation if the war could not be localised, and observed that if Germany assisted Austria against Russia it would be because, without any reference to the merits of the dispute, Germany could not afford to see Austria crushed. Just so other issues might be raised that would supersede the dispute between Austria and Servia, and would bring other Powers in, and the war would be the biggest ever known; but as long as Germany would work to keep the peace, I would keep closely in touch. I repeated that after the Servian reply it was at Vienna that some moderation must be urged.

Count Mensdorff's negotiations with Sir Edward Grey are summed up in the following letter:

Sir E. Grey to Sir M. de Bunsen.

Foreign Office,

Sir, *July 27th*, 1914.

COUNT MENSDORFF told me by instruction to-day that the Servian Government had not accepted the demands which the Austrian Government were obliged to address to them in order to secure permanently the most vital Austrian interests. Servia showed that she did not intend to abandon her subversive aims, tending towards continuous disorder in the Austrian frontier territories and their final disruption from the Austrian Monarchy. Very reluctantly, and against their wish, the Austrian

Government were compelled to take more severe measures to enforce a fundamental change of the attitude of enmity pursued up to now by Servia. As the British Government knew, the Austrian Government had for many years endeavoured to find a way to get on with their turbulent neighbour, though this had been made very difficult for them by the continuous provocations of Servia. The Serajevo murders had made clear to everyone what appalling consequences the Servian propaganda had already produced, and what a permanent threat to Austria it involved. We would understand that the Austrian Government must consider that the moment had arrived to obtain, by means of the strongest pressure, guarantees for the definite suppression of the Servian aspirations and for the security of peace and order on the south-eastern frontier of Austria. As the peaceable means to this effect were exhausted, the Austrian Government must at last appeal to force. They had not taken this decision without reluctance. Their action, which had no sort of aggressive tendency, could not be represented otherwise than as an act of self-defence. Also they thought that they would serve a European interest if they prevented Servia from being henceforth an element of general unrest such as she had been for the last ten years. The high sense of justice of the British nation and of British statesmen could not blame the Austrian Government if the latter defended by the sword what was theirs, and cleared up their position with a country whose hostile policy had forced upon them for years measures so costly as to have gravely injured Austrian national prosperity. Finally, the Austrian Government, confiding in their amicable relations with us, felt that they could count on our sympathy in a fight that was forced on them, and on our assistance in localising the fight, if necessary.

Count Mensdorff added on his own account that, as long as Servia was confronted with Turkey, Austria never took very severe measures because of her adherence to the policy of the free development of the Balkan States. Now that Servia had doubled her territory and population without any Austrian interference, the repression of Servia's subversive aims was a matter of self-defence and self-preservation on Austria's part. He reiterated that Austria had no intention of taking Servian territory or aggressive designs against Servian territory.

I said that I could not understand the construction put by the Austrian Government upon the Servian reply, and I told Count Mensdorff the substance of the conversation that I had had with the German Ambassador this morning about that reply.

Count Mensdorff admitted that on paper, the Servian reply might seem to be satisfactory; but the Servians had refused the one thing—the co-operation of Austrian officials and police—which would be a real guarantee that in practice the Servians would not carry on their subversive campaign against Austria.

I said that it seemed to me as if the Austrian Government believed that, even after the Servian reply, they could make war upon Servia anyhow, without risk of bringing Russia into the dispute. If they could make war on Servia and at the same time satisfy Russia, well and good; but, if not, the consequences would be incalculable. I pointed out to him that I quoted this phrase from an expression of the views of the German Government. I feared that it would be expected in St. Petersburg that the Servian reply would diminish the tension, and now, when Russia found that there was increased tension, the situation would become increasingly serious. Already the effect on Europe was one of anxiety.

I pointed out that our fleet was to have dispersed to-day, but we had felt unable to let it disperse. We should not think of calling up reserves at this moment, and there was no menace in what we had done about our fleet; but, owing to the possibility of a European conflagration, it was impossible for us to disperse our forces at this moment. I gave this as an illustration of the anxiety that was felt. It seemed to me that the Servian reply already involved the greatest humiliation to Servia that I had ever seen a country undergo, and it was very disappointing to me that the reply was treated by the Austrian Government as if it were as unsatisfactory as a blank negative.

I am, &c.,

E. GREY.

On July 27th the Italian Ambassador in London notified Sir A. Nicolson, the Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Office, that the Italian Government agreed to the proposal for a four-Power Conference. On the following day all the negotiations were suspended; for Austria declared war on Servia on July 28th.

In Paris feeling still remained hopeful, and it was thought that, among other things, the firm attitude shown by the Triple Entente would prevent a European outbreak. It was even suggested that Austria might be satisfied with the occupation of Belgrade and might then agree to negotiate on Russia's initiative.

The Declaration of War was in the following terms:

The Royal Government of Servia not having given a satisfactory reply to the Note presented to it by

the Austro-Hungarian Ministry in Belgrade on July 23rd, 1914, the Imperial and Royal Government of Austria-Hungary finds it necessary itself to safeguard its rights and interests and to have recourse for this purpose to force of arms.

Austria-Hungary, therefore, considers itself from this moment in a state of war with Servia.

(*Signed*) COUNT BERCHTOLD,
Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Dr. Dillon conveyed another warning to Western Europe in a telegram sent from Vienna on July 27th:

There is no longer any doubt about it; we are on the eve of war. As yet the declaration has not been formally promulgated, but it is coming. Servia, not having ratified the Hague Convention, is not bound by international law to declare war formally, and no surprise is felt here that Servian soldiers should have fired upon the Austrian troops at Temes Kubin, but the Government of Austria-Hungary will proceed with due regard for its self-imposed obligations.

The main object of the impending campaign will be the establishment of a political equilibrium in the Balkans in the sense which I expounded in my yesterday's message. Peace will not be concluded until that is accomplished.

Reports have been received here that Russia is mobilising troops on the Austrian frontier. For European peace' sake, one hopes that these rumours are groundless, because mobilisation to-day would be a radically different operation from what it was four years or eighteen months ago. Financially, of course, there is no difference; it costs the same enormous sums now as then. But I write advisedly when I affirm that a Russian mobilisation will

provoke Austrian and German operations of a like character and extent, and I am absolutely certain that none of these Powers will mobilise only to demobilise again, as they have done in the past. This I say deliberately.

The pessimism which had appeared on the Bourses earlier in the preceding week, and which had influenced the London Stock Exchange on Saturday, was now intensified, and the slump on the Stock Exchange on Tuesday was unequalled in the memory of the oldest broker. Wall Street alone professed to be optimistic; but, to judge from actual results, finance generally had made up its mind that it was necessary to prepare for the very worst.

On July 27th, just on the eve of the Declaration of War, a definite Russian warning was conveyed to the Austrian Government. It is fully explained in a telegram sent by Sir Maurice de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey on that date:

Vienna,
July 27th, 1914.

THE Russian Ambassador had to-day a long and earnest conversation with Baron Macchio, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He told him that, having just come back from St. Petersburg, he was well acquainted with the views of the Russian Government and the state of Russian public opinion. He could assure him that if actual war broke out with Servia it would be impossible to localise it, for Russia was not prepared to give way again, as she had done on previous occasions, and especially during the annexation crisis of 1909. He earnestly hoped that something would be done before Servia was

actually invaded. Baron Macchio replied that this would now be difficult, as a skirmish had already taken place on the Danube, in which the Servians had been the aggressors. The Russian Ambassador said that he would do all he could to keep the Servians quiet pending any discussions that might yet take place, and he told me that he would advise his Government to induce the Servian Government to avoid any conflict as long as possible, and to fall back before an Austrian advance. Time so gained would suffice to enable a settlement to be reached. He had just heard of a satisfactory conversation which the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs had yesterday with the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg. The former had agreed that much of the Austro-Hungarian note to Servia had been perfectly reasonable, and in fact they had practically reached an understanding as to the guarantees which Servia might reasonably be asked to give to Austria-Hungary for her future good behaviour. The Russian Ambassador urged that the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg should be furnished with full powers to continue discussion with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was very willing to advise Servia to yield all that could be fairly asked of her as an independent Power. Baron Macchio promised to submit this suggestion to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

That the Italian Government was not unduly optimistic is seen from a telegram sent by the British Ambassador in Rome, to Sir Edward Grey on July 27th :

Rome,
July 27th, 1914.

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs greatly doubts whether Germany will be willing to invite Austria to

suspend military action pending the conference, but he had hopes that military action may be practically deferred by the fact of the conference meeting at once. As at present informed, he sees no possibility of Austria receding from any point laid down in her note to Servia, but he believes that if Servia will even now accept it Austria will be satisfied, and if she had reason to think that such will be the advice of the Powers, Austria may defer action. Servia may be induced to accept note in its entirety on the advice of the four Powers invited to the conference, and this would enable her to say that she had yielded to Europe and not to Austria-Hungary alone.

Telegrams from Vienna to the Press here stating that Austria is favourably impressed with the declarations of the Italian Government have, the Minister for Foreign Affairs assures me, no foundation. He said he has expressed no opinion to Austria with regard to the note. He assured me both before and after communication of the note, and again to-day, that Austrian Government have given him assurances that they demand no territorial sacrifices from Servia.

Yet another attempt was made by Sir Edward Grey to avert a conflict:

Sir E. Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

Foreign Office,
July 28th, 1914.

GERMAN Government, having accepted principle of mediation between Austria and Russia by the four Powers, if necessary, I am ready to propose that the German Secretary of State should suggest the lines on which this principle should be applied. I will, however, keep the idea in reserve until we see how

the conversations between Austria and Russia progress.

On the same day another telegram was sent to Sir G. Buchanan :

Foreign Office,
July 28th, 1914.

IT is most satisfactory that there is a prospect of direct exchange of views between the Russian and Austrian Governments, as reported in your telegram of the 27th July.

I am ready to put forward any practical proposal that would facilitate this, but I am not quite clear as to what the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs proposes the Ministers at Belgrade should do. Could he not first mention in an exchange of views with Austria his willingness to co-operate in some such scheme ? It might then take more concrete shape.

The critical period began on July 29th, when the Russian Ambassador in London, Count Benckendorff, communicated the following telegrams to Sir Edward Grey :

(1) Telegram from M. Sazonoff to Russian Ambassador at Berlin, dated July 28th, 1914.

IN consequence of the declaration of war by Austria against Servia, the Imperial Government will announce to-morrow (29th) the mobilisation in the military circonscriptions of Odessa, Kieff, Moscow, and Kazan. Please inform German Government, confirming the absence in Russia of any aggressive intention against Germany.

The Russian Ambassador at Vienna has not been recalled from his post.

(2) Telegram to Count Benckendorff.

The Austrian declaration of war clearly puts an end to the idea of direct communications between Austria and Russia. Action by London Cabinet in order to set on foot mediation with a view to suspension of military operations of Austria against Servia is now most urgent.

Unless military operations are stopped, mediation would only allow matters to drag on and give Austria time to crush Servia.

Sir Maurice de Bunsen telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey on the 28th:

Vienna,
July 28th, 1914.

I AM informed by the Russian Ambassador that the Russian Government's suggestion has been declined by the Austro-Hungarian Government. The suggestion was to the effect that the means of settling the Austro-Servian conflict should be discussed directly between Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg, who should be authorised accordingly.

The Russian Ambassador thinks that a conference in London of the less interested Powers, such as you have proposed, offers now the only prospect of preserving peace of Europe, and he is sure that the Russian Government will acquiesce willingly in your proposal. So long as opposing armies have not actually come in contact all hope need not be abandoned.

The Berlin Government professed that it had not yet given up all hope, and Sir E. Goschen telegraphed as follows:

Berlin,

July 29th, 1914.

I WAS sent for again to-day by the Imperial Chancellor, who told me that he regretted to state that the Austro-Hungarian Government, to whom he had at once communicated your opinion, had answered that events had marched too rapidly and that it was therefore too late to act upon your suggestion that the Servian reply might form the basis of discussion. His Excellency had, on receiving their reply, despatched a message to Vienna, in which he explained that, although a certain desire had, in his opinion, been shown in the Servian reply to meet the demands of Austria, he understood entirely that, without some sure guarantees that Servia would carry out in their entirety the demands made upon her, the Austro-Hungarian Government could not rest satisfied in view of their past experience. He had then gone on to say that the hostilities which were about to be undertaken against Servia had presumably the exclusive object of securing such guarantees, seeing that the Austrian Government already assured the Russian Government that they had no territorial designs.

He advised the Austro-Hungarian Government, should this view be correct, to speak openly in this sense. The holding of such language would, he hoped, eliminate all possible misunderstandings.

As yet, he told me, he had not received a reply from Vienna.

From the fact that he had gone so far in the matter of giving advice at Vienna, his Excellency hoped that you would realise that he was sincerely doing all in his power to prevent danger of European complications.

The fact of his communicating this information to

you was a proof of the confidence which he felt in you and evidence of his anxiety that you should know he was doing his best to support your efforts in the cause of general peace, efforts which he sincerely appreciated.

A commentary on this optimism is afforded by the events of Wednesday, July 29th. The Russian decision to mobilise necessitated the placing of Germany's army on a war footing. The German Government expressed uneasiness at alleged Russian military movements on the frontier. Paris, while still hopeful, appeared to be getting ready for war, and the French Government was taking precautions—including that of advising the newspapers to exercise discretion in the publication of news. On the day before, too, Mr. Asquith had stated in the House of Commons :

As the House is aware, a formal declaration of war was made by Austria against Servia on Tuesday. The situation at the moment is one of extreme gravity.

I can only usefully say that his Majesty's Government are not relaxing their efforts to do everything in their power to circumscribe the area of possible conflict.

The Bourses were in a state of complete collapse, and even Wall Street was anxious. Wheat had risen in price.

CHAPTER V

THE EMPEROR'S RESCRIPT—AUSTRIA'S DESIGNS—THE GERMAN OFFER

MEANWHILE, the Emperor Francis Joseph, writing to the Austrian Prime Minister, said:

Dear Count Stuergk—I have resolved to instruct the Ministers of my household and foreign affairs to notify the Royal Servian Government of the beginning of a state of war between the Monarchy and Servia. In this fateful hour I feel the need of turning to my beloved peoples. I command you, therefore, to publish the enclosed manifesto.—(Signed)

FRANZ JOSEF.

Ischl,

July 28th, 1914.

MANIFESTO.

To my peoples—

It was my fervent wish to consecrate the years, which, by the grace of God, still remain to me, to the works of peace and to protect my peoples from the heavy sacrifices and burdens of war. Providence, in its wisdom, has otherwise decreed. The intrigues of a malevolent opponent compel me, in the defence of the honour of my Monarchy, for the protection of its dignity and its position as a Power, for the security

of its possessions, to grasp the sword after long years of peace.

With a quickly forgetful ingratitude, the kingdom of Servia, which, from the first beginnings of its independence as a State until quite recently, had been supported and assisted by my ancestors, has for years trodden the path of open hostility to Austria-Hungary. When, after three decades of fruitful work for peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I extended my sovereign rights to those lands, my decree called forth in the kingdom of Servia, whose rights were in nowise injured, outbreaks of unrestrained passion and the bitterest hate.

My Government at that time employed the handsome privileges of the stronger, and with extreme consideration and leniency only requested Servia to reduce her army to a peace footing, and to promise that, for the future, she would tread the path of peace and friendship.

Guided by the same spirit of moderation, my Government, when Servia, two years ago, was embroiled in a struggle with the Turkish empire, restricted its action to the defence of the most serious and vital interests of the Monarchy. It was to this attitude that Servia primarily owed the attainment of the objects of that war.

The hope that the Servian kingdom would appreciate the patience and love of peace of my Government and would keep its word has not been fulfilled. The flame of its hatred for myself and my House has blazed always higher; the design to tear from us by force inseparable portions of Austria-Hungary has been made manifest with less and less disguise.

A criminal propaganda has extended over the frontier with the object of destroying the foundations of State order in the south-eastern part of the Monarchy,

of making the people, to whom I, in my paternal affection, extended my full confidence, waver in its loyalty to the ruling House and to the Fatherland, of leading astray its growing youth, and inciting it to mischievous deeds of madness and high treason.

A series of murderous attacks, an organised, carefully-prepared, and well-carried-out conspiracy whose fruitful success wounded me and my loyal peoples to the heart, form a visible bloody track of those secret machinations which were operated and directed in Servia.

A halt must be called to these intolerable proceedings, and an end must be put to the incessant provocations of Servia. The honour and dignity of my Monarchy must be preserved unimpaired, and its political, economic, and military development must be guarded from these continual shocks. In vain did my Government make a last attempt to accomplish this object by peaceful means, and to induce Servia, by means of a serious warning, to desist.

Servia has rejected the just and moderate demands of my Government, and refused to conform to those obligations, the fulfilment of which forms the natural and necessary foundation of peace in the life of peoples and States. I must, therefore, proceed by force of arms to secure those indispensable pledges which alone can ensure tranquillity to my States within and lasting peace without.

In this solemn hour I am fully conscious of the whole significance of my resolve, and my responsibility before the Almighty. I have examined and weighed everything, and, with a serene conscience, I set out on the path to which my duty points.

I trust in my peoples, who throughout every storm have always rallied in unity and loyalty round my throne, and have always been prepared for the severest

sacrifices for the honour, the greatness, and the might of the Fatherland. I trust in Austria-Hungary's brave and devoted forces, and I trust in the Almighty to give the victory to my arms.

(Signed) FRANZ JOSEF.

On the same day Dr. E. J. Dillon addressed another warning to the British people:

The necessity of shifting the correlation of political forces in the Balkan peninsula and establishing a stable equilibrium there as the outcome of the present conflict is regarded here as axiomatic. It constitutes the postulate which must underlie any proposals which have for their object a pacific settlement of the quarrel. Austria demands no territorial expansion for herself, but she is convinced that the partition of the provinces severed from Turkey was so unjust, and, so to say, contrary to nature, that it is radically incompatible with that tranquillity which is vital to her own well-being.

This principle, therefore, would have to be recognised as the basis for any accord, whether arrived at through the good offices of foreign States or as the result of a successful campaign. Servia can no longer be permitted to radiate subversive ideas which paralyse the mechanism of the Government in Bosnia. If the peace-loving Powers which are now addressing themselves to the humanitarian task of putting an end to hostilities and neutralising the forces which make for a European war are bent on attaining this praiseworthy end, it behoves them to accept these postulates, which I set forth without comment before they proceed any further. As they are vital to the Dual Monarchy, they cannot be submitted to any arbiter, nor discussed academically by the State thus interested.

Another all-important consideration turns upon the methods of furthering the proposals for a localisation of the struggle, a cessation of hostilities, and a friendly discussion in conference. These methods must have an exclusively pacific character. Deterrents will prove mischievous and fatal. It would, for example, be a catastrophic mistake to imagine that mobilisation by the Russian Government would cause Austria-Hungary to realise the tremendous issues which are now at stake, and recoil from raising them. She is under no illusion as to the potentialities of the present crisis. They have been weighed carefully in advance.

It was only after long hesitation, reflection, and forbearance that she summoned up resolution to bring matters to a head. And that preliminary survey of the contingencies was comprehensive just as the precautionary measures are which were also adopted. The only effect, therefore, which mobilisation as a deterrent could have would be to defeat its own object.

The moment Russia mobilises against the Dual Monarchy, the German Empire, as well as Austria-Hungary, will respond, and then the object of these military operations will be pursued to the bitter end, with the results so clearly foreseen, and so graphically described by Sir Edward Grey in his proposals.

In the interests of European peace, therefore, which can still be safeguarded, in spite of the hostilities now going ahead, it is essential that every means of friendly pressure should be thoroughly exhausted before a provocative measure such as mobilisation is resorted to. For mobilisation by Russia, Germany, and Austria will connote the outbreak of the long-feared general Continental war.

The attitude taken up here, and doubtless in Germany, towards Sir Edward Grey's disposal fully

bears out everything I have written upon the origin of the Austro-Servian quarrel and the object of the campaign. His repudiation of an intention to intervene between the two combatants is received with warm approval, as, indeed, is his entire offer of good offices. Between Austria and Servia not only must the struggle be carried on without outside interposition, but likewise the terms on which the campaign will be terminated and peace concluded must be treated as matters concerning only the belligerents.

From these principles Austria-Hungary will not under any circumstances swerve. Were it otherwise and a third Power felt warranted in intervening in order to regulate the meed of retribution imposed upon Servia, this intervention would create a precedent resembling the Monroe Doctrine, which Austria could not tolerate.

With regard to the suspension of hostilities, mentioned in Sir Edward Grey's proposal, it has come too late. The machinery of war is in motion, and cannot now be stopped. The suggestion of adopting a practical means of localising the war is applauded, and will be supported by Austria and Germany. I may add, however, that as yet there is nothing, not even recondite dissonance, in the diplomatic relations between Austria and Russia which would justify an apprehension that these Powers are likely to quarrel.

On the 29th Sir Maurice de Bunsen wired to Sir Edward Grey stating that nothing could be done to stop the war between Austria and Servia. At the same time a telegram was received in London from Sir Rennell Rodd, suggesting, on behalf of the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs,

an " exchange of views " in London. To this Sir Edward Grey replied :

Foreign Office,
July 29th, 1914.

It is impossible for me to initiate discussions with Ambassadors here, as I understand from Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs that Austria will not accept any discussion on basis of Servian Note, and the inference of all I have heard from Vienna and Berlin is that Austria will not accept any form of mediation by the Powers as between Austria and Servia. Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs must therefore speak at Berlin and Vienna. I shall be glad if a favourable reception is given to any suggestions he can make there.

This telegram is followed in the White Paper by one of the most important in the series. It is from Mr. H. D. Beaumont, the British Delegate on the International Financial Commission sitting at Athens, to Sir Edward Grey ; and it throws a very suggestive light on the Austrians' designs on Servia and the new Servian territory secured as a result of the Balkan War. Mr. Beaumont telegraphs :

Constantinople,
July 29th, 1914.

I UNDERSTAND that the designs of Austria may extend considerably beyond the Sanjak and a punitive occupation of Servian territory. I gathered this from a remark let fall by the Austrian Ambassador here, who spoke of the deplorable economic situation of Salonica under Greek administration and of the assistance on which the Austrian army could count

from Mussulman population discontented with Servian rule.

Further efforts at mediation were being made even on the 29th, as is seen from a telegram sent by Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen :

Foreign Office,
July 29th, 1914.

THE German Ambassador has been instructed by the German Chancellor to inform me that he is endeavouring to mediate between Vienna and St. Petersburg, and he hopes with good success. Austria and Russia seem to be in constant touch, and he is endeavouring to make Vienna explain in a satisfactory form at St. Petersburg the scope and extension of Austrian proceedings in Servia. I told the German Ambassador that an agreement arrived at direct between Austria and Russia would be the best possible solution. I would press no proposal as long as there was a prospect of that, but my information this morning was that the Austrian Government have declined the suggestion of the Russian Government that the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg should be authorised to discuss directly with the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs the means of settling the Austro-Servian conflict. The Press correspondents at St. Petersburg had been told that Russian Government would mobilise. The German Government had said that they were favourable in principle to mediation between Russia and Austria if necessary. They seemed to think the particular method of conference, consultation or discussion, or even *conversations à quatre* in London too formal a method. I urged that the German Government should suggest any method by which the influence of the four Powers could be used together to prevent

war between Austria and Russia. France agreed, Italy agreed. The whole idea of mediation or mediating influence was ready to be put into operation by any method that Germany could suggest if mine was not acceptable. In fact mediation was ready to come into operation by any method that Germany thought possible if only Germany would "press the button" in the interests of peace.

The first official hint of what Mr. Asquith on August 6th called Germany's "infamous proposal" was contained in a telegram sent on July 29th to Sir Edward Grey by the British Ambassador in Berlin:

Berlin,

July 29th, 1914.

I WAS asked to call upon the Chancellor to-night. His Excellency had just returned from Potsdam.

He said that should Austria be attacked by Russia a European conflagration might, he feared, become inevitable, owing to Germany's obligations as Austria's ally, in spite of his continued efforts to maintain peace. He then proceeded to make the following strong bid for British neutrality. He said that it was clear, so far as he was able to judge the main principle which governed British policy, that Great Britain would never stand by and allow France to be crushed in any conflict there might be. That, however, was not the object at which Germany aimed. Provided that neutrality of Great Britain were certain, every assurance would be given to the British Government that the Imperial Government aimed at no territorial acquisitions at the expense of France should they prove victorious in any war that might ensue.

I questioned his Excellency about the French

colonies, and he said that he was unable to give a similar undertaking in that respect. As regards Holland, however, his Excellency said that, so long as Germany's adversaries respected the intregity and neutrality of the Netherlands, Germany was ready to give His Majesty's Government an assurance that she would do likewise. It depended upon the action of France what operations Germany might be forced to enter upon in Belgium, but when the war was over, Belgian integrity would be respected if she had not sided against Germany.

His Excellency ended by saying that ever since he had been Chancellor the object of his policy had been, as you were aware, to bring about an understanding with England; he trusted that these assurances might form the basis of that understanding which he so much desired. He had in mind a general neutrality agreement between England and Germany, though it was of course at the present moment too early to discuss details, and an assurance of British neutrality in the conflict which present crisis might possibly produce, would enable him to look forward to realisation of his desire.

In reply to his Excellency's enquiry how I thought his request would appeal to you, I said that I did not think it probable that at this stage of events you would care to bind yourself to any course of action and that I was of opinion that you would desire to retain full liberty.

Our conversation upon this subject having come to an end, I communicated the contents of your telegram of to-day to his Excellency, who expressed his best thanks to you.

The English attitude towards France was first mentioned in the following letter from Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie :

Foreign Office,
July 29th, 1914.

Sir,

AFTER telling M. Cambon to-day how grave the situation seemed to be, I told him that I meant to tell the German Ambassador to-day that he must not be misled by the friendly tone of our conversations into any sense of false security that we should stand aside if all the efforts to preserve the peace, which we were now making in common with Germany, failed. But I went on to say to M. Cambon that I thought it necessary to tell him also that public opinion here approached the present difficulty from a quite different point of view from that taken during the difficulty as to Morocco a few years ago. In the case of Morocco the dispute was one in which France was primarily interested, and in which it appeared that Germany, in an attempt to crush France, was fastening a quarrel on France on a question that was the subject of a special agreement between France and us. In the present case the dispute between Austria and Servia was not one in which we felt called to take a hand. Even if the question became one between Austria and Russia we should not feel called upon to take a hand in it. It would then be a question of the supremacy of Teuton or Slav—a struggle for supremacy in the Balkans; and our idea had always been to avoid being drawn into a war over a Balkan question. If Germany became involved and France became involved, we had not made up our minds what we should do; it was a case that we should have to consider. France would then have been drawn into a quarrel which was not hers, but in which, owing to her alliance, her honour and interest obliged her to engage. We were free from engagements, and we should have to decide

what British interests required us to do. I thought it necessary to say that, because, as he knew, we were taking all precautions with regard to our fleet, and I was about to warn Prince Lichnowsky not to count on our standing aside, but it would not be fair that I should let M. Cambon be misled into supposing that this meant we had decided what to do in a contingency that I still hoped might not arise.

M. Cambon said that I had explained the situation very clearly. He understood it to be that in a Balkan quarrel, and in a struggle for supremacy between Teuton and Slav, we should not feel called to intervene; should other issues be raised, and Germany and France become involved, so that the question became one of the hegemony of Europe, we should then decide what it was necessary for us to do. He seemed quite prepared for this announcement, and made no criticism upon it.

He said French opinion was calm, but decided. He anticipated a demand from Germany that France would be neutral while Germany attacked Russia. This assurance France, of course, could not give; she was bound to help Russia if Russia was attacked.

I am, &c.,

E. GREY.

At the same time a friendly warning was conveyed to Prince Lichnowsky; and Sir Edward Goschen was at once informed:

Foreign Office,

July 29th, 1914.

Sir,

AFTER speaking to the German Ambassador this afternoon about the European situation, I said that I wished to say to him, in a quite private and friendly

way, something that was on my mind. The situation was very grave. While it was restricted to the issues at present actually involved we had no thought of interfering in it. But if Germany became involved in it, and then France, the issue might be so great that it would involve all European interests; and I did not wish him to be misled by the friendly tone of our conversation—which I hoped would continue—into thinking that we should stand aside.

He said that he quite understood this, but he asked whether I meant that we should, under certain circumstances, intervene?

I replied that I did not wish to say that, or to use anything that was like a threat or an attempt to apply pressure by saying that, if things became worse, we should intervene. There would be no question of our intervening if Germany was not involved, or even if France was not involved. But we knew very well that, if the issue did become such that we thought British interests required us to intervene, we must intervene at once, and the decision would have to be very rapid, just as the decisions of other Powers had to be. I hoped that the friendly tone of our conversations would continue as at present, and that I should be able to keep as closely in touch with the German Government in working for peace. But if we failed in our efforts to keep the peace, and if the issue spread so that it involved practically every European interest, I did not wish to be open to any reproach from him that the friendly tone of all our conversations had misled him or his Government into supposing that we should not take action, and to the reproach that, if they had not been so misled, the course of things might have been different.

The German Ambassador took no exception to what I had said; indeed he told me that it accorded

with what he had already given in Berlin as his view of the situation.

I am, &c.,
E. GREY.

An entirely new reference to the Austrian attitude towards Servia was made by Count Mensdorff at an interview with Sir Edward Grey on the 29th, and communicated by Sir Edward to Sir Maurice de Bunsen. The last paragraph of the letter that follows contains a diplomatic principle hitherto never emphasised:

Foreign Office,
July 29th, 1914.

Sir,

THE Austrian Ambassador told me to-day he had ready a long memorandum, which he proposed to leave, and which he said gave an account of the conduct of Servia towards Austria, and an explanation of how necessary the Austrian action was.

I said that I did not wish to discuss the merits of the question between Austria and Servia. The news to-day seemed to me very bad for the peace of Europe. The Powers were not allowed to help in getting satisfaction for Austria, which they might get if they were given an opportunity, and European peace was at stake.

Count Mensdorff said that the war with Servia must proceed. Austria could not continue to be exposed to the necessity of mobilising again and again, as she had been obliged to do in recent years. She had no idea of territorial aggrandisement, and all she wished was to make sure that her interests were safeguarded.

I said that it would be quite possible, without nominally interfering with the independence of

Servia or taking away any of her territory, to turn her into a sort of vassal State.

Count Mensdorff deprecated this.

In reply to some further remarks of mine, as to the effect that the Austrian action might have upon the Russian position in the Balkans, he said that, before the Balkan war, Servia had always been regarded as being in the Austrian sphere of influence.

I am, &c.

E. GREY.

The succeeding incidents in the development of the situation are summed up in the following telegrams, which are taken from the White Paper:

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.—Received July 30th.

Vienna,
July 29th, 1914.

I LEARN that mobilisation of Russian corps destined to carry out operations on Austrian frontier has been ordered. My informant is Russian Ambassador. Ministry for Foreign Affairs here has realised, though somewhat late in the day, that Russia will not remain indifferent in present crisis. I believe that the news of Russian mobilisation will not be a surprise to the Ministry, but so far it is not generally known in Vienna this evening. Unless mediation, which German Government declared themselves ready to offer in concert with three other Great Powers not immediately interested in the Austro-Servian dispute, be bought to bear forthwith, irrevocable steps may be taken in present temper of this country. German Ambassador feigns surprise that Servian affairs should be of such interest to

Russia. Both my Russian and French colleagues have spoken to him to-day. Russian Ambassador expressed the hope that it might still be possible to arrange matters, and explained that it was impossible for Russia to do otherwise than take an interest in the present dispute. Russia, he said, had done what she could already at Belgrade to induce Servian Government to meet principal Austrian demands in a favourable spirit; if approached in a proper manner, he thought she would probably go still further in this direction. But she was justly offended at having been completely ignored, and she could not consent to be excluded from the settlement. German Ambassador said that if proposals were put forward which opened any prospect of possible acceptance by both sides, he personally thought that Germany might consent to act as mediator in concert with the three other Powers.

I gather from what Russian Ambassador said to me that he is much afraid of the effect that any serious engagement may have upon Russian public opinion. I gathered, however, that Russia would go a long way to meet Austrian demands on Servia.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.

Vienna.
July 30th, 1914.

RUSSIAN Ambassador hopes that Russian mobilisation will be regarded by Austria as what it is, viz., a clear intimation that Russia must be consulted regarding the fate of Servia, but he does not know how the Austrian Government are taking it. He says that Russia must have an assurance that Servia will not be crushed, but she would understand that Austria-Hungary is compelled to exact from Servia measures which will secure her Slav provinces from

the continuance of hostile propaganda from Servian territory.

The French Ambassador hears from Berlin that the German Ambassador at Vienna is instructed to speak seriously to the Austro-Hungarian Government against acting in a manner calculated to provoke a European war.

Unfortunately the German Ambassador is himself so identified with extreme anti-Russian and anti-Servian feeling prevalent in Vienna that he is unlikely to plead the cause of peace with entire sincerity.

Although I am not able to verify it, I have private information that the German Ambassador knew the text of the Austrian ultimatum to Servia before it was despatched and telegraphed it to the German Emperor. I know from the German Ambassador himself that he endorses every line of it.

Sir M. de Bunsen to Sir Edward Grey.

Vienna.
July 30*th*, 1914.

THE Russian Ambassador gave the French Ambassador and myself this afternoon at the French Embassy, where I happened to be, an account of his interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, which he said was quite friendly. The Minister for Foreign Affairs had told him that as Russia had mobilised, Austria must, of course, do the same. This, however, should not be regarded as a threat, but merely as the adoption of military precautions similar to those which had been taken across the frontier. He said he had no objection to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg continuing their conversations, although he did not say that they could be resumed on the basis of the Servian reply.

On the whole, the Russian Ambassador is not dissatisfied. He had begun to make his preparations for his departure on the strength of a rumour that Austria would declare war in reply to mobilisation. He now hopes that something may yet be done to prevent war with Austria.

At the last moment the Ambassadors were working hard for peace; and even diplomacy has been proved to have a human side to it. The telegram sent by Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey on July 30th is pathetic enough:

St. Petersburg,
July 30th, 1914.

FRENCH Ambassador and I visited Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning. His Excellency said that German Ambassador had told him yesterday afternoon that German Government were willing to guarantee that Servian integrity would be respected by Austria. To this he had replied that this might be so, but nevertheless Servia would become an Austrian vassal, just as, in similar circumstances, Bokhara had become a Russian vassal. There would be a revolution in Russia if she were to tolerate such a state of affairs.

M. Sazonoff told us that absolute proof was in possession of Russian Government that Germany was making military and naval preparations against Russia—more particularly in the direction of the Gulf of Finland.

German Ambassador had a second interview with Minister for Foreign Affairs at 2 a.m., when former completely broke down on seeing that war was inevitable. He appealed to M. Sazonoff to make some suggestion which he would telegraph to German Government as a last hope. M. Sazonoff accordingly

drew up and handed to German Ambassador a formula in French, of which following is translation :

"If Austria, recognising that her conflict with Servia has assumed character of question of European interest, declares herself ready to eliminate from her ultimatum points which violate principle of sovereignty of Servia, Russia engages to stop all military preparations."

Preparations for general mobilisation will be proceeded with if this proposal is rejected by Austria, and inevitable result will be a European war. Excitement here has reached such a pitch that, if Austria refuses to make a concession, Russia cannot hold back, and, now that she knows that Germany is arming, she can hardly postpone, for strategical reasons, converting partial into general mobilisation.

The British rejection of the "infamous offer" was conveyed in the following telegram from Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen :

Foreign Office,
July 30*th*, 1914.

His Majesty's Government cannot for a moment entertain the Chancellor's proposal that they should bind themselves to neutrality on such terms.

What he asks us in effect is to engage to stand by while French colonies are taken and France is beaten so long as Germany does not take French territory as distinct from the colonies.

From the material point of view such a proposal is unacceptable, for France, without further territory in Europe being taken from her, could be so crushed as to lose her position as a great Power, and become subordinate to German policy.

Altogether apart from that, it would be a disgrace

for us to make this bargain with Germany at the expense of France, a disgrace from which the good name of this country would never recover.

The Chancellor also in effect asks us to bargain away whatever obligation or interest we have as regards the neutrality of Belgium. We could not entertain that bargain either.

Having said so much, it is unnecessary to examine whether the prospect of a future general neutrality agreement between England and Germany offered positive advantages sufficient to compensate us for tying our hands now. We must reserve our full freedom to act as circumstances may seem to us to require in any such unfavourable and regrettable development of the present crisis as the Chancellor contemplates.

You should speak to the Chancellor in the above sense, and add most earnestly that the one way of maintaining the good relations between England and Germany is that they should continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe; if we succeed in this object, the mutual relations of Germany and England will, I believe, be *ipso facto* improved and strengthened. For that object His Majesty's Government will work in that way with all sincerity and goodwill.

And I will say this: If the peace of Europe can be preserved, and the present crisis safely passed, my own endeavour will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it, so far as I could, through the last Balkan crisis, and, Germany having a corresponding object, our relations sensibly improved. The idea has hitherto been too Utopian to form the

subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis, so much more acute than any that Europe has gone through for generations, be safely passed, I am hopeful that the relief and reaction which will follow may make possible some more definite rapprochement between the Powers than has been possible hitherto.

As Anglo-French co-operation by force of arms was gradually being rendered inevitable, M. Cambon called on Sir Edward Grey. The result of the interview was a letter from Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie, with enclosures, all of which are self-explanatory:

Foreign Office,
July 30th, 1914.

Sir,

M. CAMBON reminded me to-day of the letter I had written to him two years ago, in which we agreed that, if the peace of Europe was seriously threatened, we would discuss what we were prepared to do. I enclose for convenience of reference copies of the letter in question and of M. Cambon's reply. He said that the peace of Europe was never more seriously threatened than it was now. He did not wish to ask me to say directly that we would intervene, but he would like me to say what we should do if certain circumstances arose. The particular hypothesis he had in mind was an aggression by Germany on France. He gave me a paper, of which a copy is also enclosed, showing that the German military preparations were more advanced and more on the offensive upon the frontier than anything France had yet done. He anticipated that the aggression would take the form of either a demand that France should cease her preparations, or a demand that she should engage to remain neutral if there was war between Germany

and Russia. Neither of these things could France admit.

I said that the Cabinet was to meet to-morrow morning, and I would see him again to-morrow afternoon.

I am, &c.,
E. GREY.

Enclosure 1

Sir Edward Grey to M. Cambon.

Foreign Office,
November 22nd, 1912.

My dear Ambassador,

FROM time to time in recent years the French and British naval and military experts have consulted together. It has always been understood that such consultation does not restrict the freedom of either Government to decide at any future time whether or not to assist the other by armed force. We have agreed that consultation between experts is not, and ought not to be regarded as, an engagement that commits either Government to action in a contingency that has not arisen and may never arise. The disposition, for instance, of the French and British fleets respectively at the present moment is not based upon an engagement to co-operate in war.

You have, however, pointed out that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, it might become essential to know whether it could in that event depend upon the armed assistance of the other.

I agree that, if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power, or something that threatened the general peace, it should immediately discuss with the other whether both Governments should act together to

prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common. If these measures involved action, the plans of the General Staffs would at once be taken into consideration, and the Governments would then decide what effect should be given to them.

Yours, &c.,

E. GREY.

Enclosure 2

M. Cambon to Sir Edward Grey.

(Translation)

French Embassy, London.

November 23, 1912.

Dear Sir Edward,

YOU reminded me in your letter of yesterday, 22nd November, that during the last few years the military and naval authorities of France and Great Britain had consulted with each other from time to time; that it had always been understood that these consultations should not restrict the liberty of either Government to decide in the future whether they should lend each other the support of their armed forces; that, on either side, these consultations between experts were not and should not be considered as engagements binding our Governments to take action in certain eventualities; that, however, I had remarked to you that, if one or other of the two Governments had grave reasons to fear an unprovoked attack on the part of a third Power, it would become essential to know whether it could count on the armed support of the other.

Your letter answers that point, and I am authorised to state that, in the event of one of our two Governments having grave reasons to fear either an

attack from a third Power, or some event threatening the general peace, that Government would immediately examine with the other the question whether both Governments should act together in order to prevent aggression or preserve peace. If so, the two Governments would deliberate as to the measures which they would be prepared to take in common; if those measures involved action, the two Governments would take into immediate consideration the plans of their general staffs and would then decide as to the effect to be given to those plans.

Yours, &c.,

PAUL CAMBON.

Enclosure 3

French Minister for Foreign Affairs to M. Cambon.

(Translation)

THE German army had its advance-posts on our frontiers yesterday (Friday). German patrols twice penetrated on to our territory. Our advance-posts are withdrawn to a distance of 10 kilometres from the frontier. The local population is protesting against being thus abandoned to the attack of the enemy's army, but the Government wishes to make it clear to public opinion and to the British Government that in no case will France be the aggressor. The whole 16th Corps from Metz, reinforced by a part of the 8th from Trèves and Cologne, is occupying the frontier at Metz on the Luxemburg side. The 15th Army Corps from Strassburg has closed up on the frontier. The inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine are prevented by the threat of being shot from crossing the frontier. Reservists have been called back to Germany by tens of thousands. This is the last stage before mobilisation, whereas we have not called out a single reservist.

As you see, Germany has done it. I would add that all my information goes to show that the German preparations began on Saturday, the very day on which the Austrian Note was handed in.

These facts, added to those contained in my telegram of yesterday, will enable you to prove to the British Government the pacific intentions of the one party and the aggressive intentions of the other.

Paris,

July 31st, 1914.

On the afternoon of the day—July 30th—when these telegrams were being despatched, the House of Commons met in the shadow of war. The Amending Bill was formally postponed, and Mr. Asquith supplemented Sir Edward Grey's short statement. The proceedings were as follows:

Mr. BONAR LAW asked the Secretary for Foreign Affairs if he had any information which he could communicate to the House.

Sir E. GREY: There is very little I can say. I regret I cannot say the situation is less grave than it was yesterday. The outstanding facts are much the same. Austria has begun war against Servia. Russia has ordered a partial mobilisation. This has not hitherto led to any corresponding steps by other Powers, so far as our information goes. We continue to pursue the one great object of preserving European peace, and for this purpose are keeping in close touch with other Powers. In thus keeping in touch we have, I am glad to say, had no difficulties so far, though it has not been possible for the Powers to unite in joint diplomatic action as was proposed on Monday.

A motion had been placed on the paper by the Prime Minister that the second reading of the Government of Ireland (Amendment) Bill should have precedence for the day of the business of Supply.

The SPEAKER: I understand the Prime Minister is going to make a statement on this motion. I think I ought to say that the Standing Orders do not provide for any amendment or debate, but as this is an exceptional occasion I have no doubt the House will be anxious to hear what the Prime Minister has to say and will waive the Standing Orders.

Mr. ASQUITH: I do not propose to make the motion which stands in my name. By the indulgence of the House, I should like to give the reason. We meet to-day under conditions of gravity which are almost unparalleled in the experience of every one of us. The issues of peace and war are hanging in the balance, and with them the risk of a catastrophe of which it is impossible to measure either the dimensions or the effects. In these circumstances, it is of vital importance in the interests of the whole world that this country, which has no interest of its own directly at stake, should present a united front and be able to speak and act with the authority of an undivided nation. If we were to proceed to-day with the first order on the paper (the Amending Bill) we should inevitably, unless the debate was conducted in an artificial tone, be involved in acute controversy in regard to domestic differences whose importance to ourselves no one in any quarter of the House is disposed to disparage or to belittle. I need not say more than that such a use of our time at such a moment might have injurious, and lastingly injurious, effects on the international situation. I have had the advantage of consultation with the Leader of the Opposition, who, I know, shares to the full the view which I have expressed. We shall therefore propose

to put off for the present the consideration of the second reading of the Amending Bill, of course without prejudice to its future, in the hope that by a postponement of the discussion the patriotism of all parties will contribute what lies in our power if not to avert at least to circumscribe the calamities which threaten the world. In the meantime, the business which we shall take will be confined to necessary matters and will not be of a controversial character.

Mr. BONAR LAW: As the Prime Minister has informed the House, it is with our concurrence that he has made the suggestion which we have just heard. At a moment like the present, when even those of us who do not share diplomatic secrets feel that the statement of the Prime Minister is true, that peace or war may be trembling in the balance, I think it is of the utmost importance that it should be made plain to everyone that whatever our domestic differences may be they do not prevent us presenting a united front in the councils of the world. I am obliged to the Prime Minister for saying that in the meantime party controversial business will not be taken, and I am sure it is his intention, as it would be the wish of the whole House, that this postponement will not in any way prejudice the interests of any of the parties to the controversy. I should like to add—and I do so not to give information to the House, the members of which quite understand the position, but in order that it may be plain outside—that in what I have now said I speak not only, in so far as I am entitled to speak, for the Unionist Party, but for Ulster, and that I have the concurrence of my right hon. friend the member for Trinity College (Sir Edward Carson).

The second reading of the Amending Bill was then formally postponed.

It is a matter of very recent history that the call for a united front was answered with a rapidity and enthusiasm which surprised even our friends abroad. All sections of the House cordially supported the Government, though a small, insistent section urged up to the last that England had " no interest " in the great struggle, and should remain neutral at all costs.

The remaining steps were quickly taken. On Thursday the Kaiser and his Cabinet sat in council until midnight. The Special Reserve Sections of the British Territorial Force were mobilised; guards were posted at forts and dockyards; Russian reserves were called out; and, for the first time in the crisis, there was a heavy slump on Wall Street. It was impossible to get gold in Paris, and the Bank of France made arrangements to issue small notes—a step which was taken in London a week later. Soon after eight o'clock on Thursday evening Reuter's Berlin correspondent stated:

According to information obtained from a diplomatic source here, Germany last night addressed a request to Russia for an explanation of the mobilisation of the Russian forces.

The Russian Government was asked what was the object of the mobilisation, whether it was directed against Austria, and whether Russia was willing to order a cessation of the mobilisation.

The Russian Government, it is understood, was also requested to give a reply as speedily as possible.

The final attempts at mediation were discussed by Dr. Dillon in a message handed in at Vienna on Wednesday, but delayed by the censor,

and only received in time for publication on Friday:

The days of war correspondents are over. The vicissitudes of the struggle will be chronicled day by day by official annalists, to the exclusion of all others. Newspaper correspondents will be free to work the embroidery, provided the patterns chosen are not disapproved.

Meanwhile, the only noteworthy fact which the mobilisation order has brought into clear relief is the cheerful readiness, in many cases the eagerness, with which men of all tongues, religions, and nationalities have responded to the call to arms. I always maintained that those who counted upon disaffection among the Polish, Bohemian, Slowak, Bosnian, and other Slav troops in case of war against a Slav Power were making a gross miscalculation. To-day events have fully corroborated this forecast. In Polish Galicia, in Slavonia, Bohemia, and Bosnia unanimity and enthusiasm are the characteristics of the population.

If I were asked to account for this phenomenon on psychological grounds I should ascribe it in great part to the intense indignation aroused by the crime which pierced the heart of the venerable Emperor, who is idolised by all his peoples. Moreover, the murdered Archduke was a most popular figure amongst the Southern Slavs of the Monarchy.

From the progress of the campaign, of which we know practically nothing as yet, it is no abrupt transfer of thought to turn our attention to the chances of localising it. Everybody in this country whose opinion carries weight fervently hopes that a European conflict will be avoided. The Government, too, is determined to abstain rigorously from every avoidable measure calculated to afford even a pretext for hostilities. Austria is satisfied with her territorial

possessions, and will not utilise victory to increase them. She will go further, and actively co-operate with England in the humanitarian work of hindering the spread of hostilities. Her oft-expressed desire is for a stable equilibrium in the Balkans, which is indispensable to normal life there, and for permanent tranquility among the lesser States.

Considering the irresistible interest which the prevention of a European war has for all layers of the population on the Continent and in Great Britain, it will not be amiss to repeat that localisation depends upon two negative conditions, the non-fulfilment of which would frustrate the best-laid plans of conciliation. One is that Austria shall not be compelled, by the massing of Russian troops on her frontier, to immobilise corresponding masses of her army opposite them. If this condition be not respected, Germany, as well as this country, will, as I stated before, adopt analogous measures, and will then find it exceedingly difficult to draw the line there.

The second condition of success is that the mediation proposed by Sir Edward Grey and accepted by the other disinterested Powers shall not have for its object a modification of the peace conditions agreed upon by the belligerents. The Austro-Servian conflict, in all its phases, from the wording of the Note to the ratification of the peace treaty, is deemed to be a matter which concerns those two States alone. Just as Count Aehrenthal refused firmly to discuss the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with any Power but Turkey, and accepted the suggestion to come to a conference only on the express condition that this question should be eliminated from the list of topics to be dealt with, so will Count Berchtold decline to admit any interference between Austria and Servia when the conditions of peace are being settled, signed, or ratified.

With regard to these conditions I have expressed myself in former messages with the precise degree of clearness suited to the present phase of the struggle. It might be worse than unfruitful to discuss this matter more fully to-day. Certain points, however, are clear enough. Thus, Austria will forgo all advance of her boundaries at the cost of any State. But it is self-evident that the peace terms will not be identical with the conditions which she proposed as an efficacious means of preventing an outbreak of hostilities. In this respect no campaign ever ended as it began. The guarantees for permanent peace on which she will insist must be efficacious in all respects, and the terms imposed on Servia will be calculated to contribute to them materially. It is at this conjuncture that the good offices offered by Sir Edward Grey and his foreign colleagues will be most sorely needed. As yet, however, there is no palpable ground for apprehending that their noble task will be other than successful.

CHAPTER VI

THE DRAMATIC CLIMAX—DECLARATION OF WAR—STATEMENTS BY MR. ASQUITH AND SIR EDWARD GREY.

THAT the climax was now rapidly approaching will be seen from the following telegrams, taken from the White Paper:

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.

Berlin,

July 31*st*, 1914.

ACCORDING to information just received by German Government from their Ambassador at St. Petersburg, whole Russian army and fleet are being mobilised. Chancellor tells me that "Kriegsgefahr" will be proclaimed at once by German Government, as it can only be against Germany that Russian general mobilisation is directed. Mobilisation would follow almost immediately. His Excellency added in explanation that "Kriegsgefahr" signified the taking of certain precautionary measures consequent upon strained relations with a foreign country.

This news from St. Petersburg, added his Excellency, seemed to him to put an end to all hope of a peaceful solution of the crisis. Germany must certainly prepare for all emergencies.

I asked him whether he could not still put pressure on the authorities at Vienna to do something in

general interests to reassure Russia and to show themselves disposed to continue discussions on a friendly basis. He replied that last night he had begged Austria to reply to your last proposal, and that he had received a reply to the effect that Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs would take wishes of the Emperor this morning in the matter.

Sir G. Buchanan to Sir Edward Grey.

St. Petersburg,

July 31*st*, 1914.

IT has been decided to issue orders for general mobilisation.

This decision was taken in consequence of report received from Russian Ambassador in Vienna to the effect that Austria is determined not to yield to intervention of Powers, and that she is moving troops against Russia as well as against Servia.

Russia has also reason to believe that Germany is making active military preparations, and she cannot afford to let her get a start.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie and Sir E. Goschen.

Foreign Office,

July 31*st*, 1914.

I STILL trust that situation is not irretrievable, but in view of prospect of mobilisation in Germany it becomes essential to His Majesty's Government, in view of existing treaties, to ask whether French (German) Government is prepared to engage to respect neutrality of Belgium so long as no other Power violates it.

A similar request is being addressed to German (French) Government. It is important to have an early answer.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Villiers.

Foreign Office,

July 31*st*, 1914.

IN view of existing treaties, you should inform Minister for Foreign Affairs that, in consideration of the possibility of a European war, I have asked French and German Governments whether each is prepared to respect the neutrality of Belgium provided it is violated by no other Power.

You should say that I assume that the Belgian Government will maintain to the utmost of her power her neutrality, which I desire and expect other Powers to uphold and observe.

You should inform the Belgian Government that an early reply is desired.

Sir F. Bertie to Sir Edward Grey.

Paris,

July 31*st*, 1914.

AT 7 o'clock this evening I was sent for by Minister for Foreign Affairs. When I arrived the German Ambassador was leaving his Excellency.

German Ambassador had informed his Excellency that, in view of the fact that orders had been given for the total mobilisation of Russian army and fleet, German Government have in an ultimatum which they have addressed to the Russian Government required that Russian forces should be demobilised.

The German Government will consider it necessary to order the total mobilisation of the German army on the Russian and French frontiers if within twelve hours the Russian Government do not give an undertaking to comply with German demand.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs asks me to communicate this to you, and enquires what, in these circumstances, will be the attitude of England.

German Ambassador could not say when the twelve hours terminates. He is going to call at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to-morrow (Saturday) at 1 p.m. in order to receive the French Government's answer as to the attitude they will adopt in the circumstances.

He intimated the possibility of his requiring his passports.

I am informed by the Russian Ambassador that he is not aware of any general mobilisation of the Russian forces having taken place.

Events on Friday, July 31st, followed one another with extreme rapidity. The London Stock Exchange was closed for the first time in its history. This step had become necessary owing to the closing of the Continental Bourses a few days before. The well-known French Socialist and patriot, M. Jean Jaurès, was shot dead while sitting in a café. His assailant proved to be a young Royalist of unbalanced mind.

Late on Friday night it was stated that German patrols had actually crossed the French frontier. Martial law had been declared earlier in the day throughout the German Empire. The English Bank Rate was raised to eight per cent. (On Thursday it had been raised from three to four per cent.) And, above all, Mr. Asquith made a grave statement in the House. When moving the adjournment he said :

I have a statement to make to the House.

We have just heard, not from St. Petersburg but from Germany, that Russia has proclaimed a general mobilisation of her army and fleet, and that in consequence of this, martial law has been proclaimed in Germany.

We understand this to mean that mobilisation will follow in Germany if the Russian mobilisation is general and is proceeded with.

Under the circumstances I should prefer not to answer any further questions until Monday.

War between France and Russia on one side and Germany on the other was clearly inevitable. The question was: Could England, in the face of events, remain neutral? The following quotations from the White Book will show how the question was at length answered:

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

Foreign Office,

July 31*st*, 1914.

Sir,

M. CAMBON referred to-day to a telegram that had been shown to Sir Arthur Nicolson this morning from the French Ambassador in Berlin, saying that it was the uncertainty with regard to whether we would intervene which was the encouraging element in Berlin, and that, if we would only declare definitely on the side of Russia and France, it would decide the German attitude in favour of peace.

I said that it was quite wrong to suppose that we had left Germany under the impression that we would not intervene. I had refused overtures to promise that we should remain neutral. I had not only definitely declined to say that we would remain neutral, I had even gone so far this morning as to say to the German Ambassador that, if France and Germany became involved in war, we should be drawn into it. That, of course, was not the same thing as taking an engagement to France, and I told M. Cambon of it only to show that we had not left

Germany under the impression that we would stand aside.

M. Cambon then asked me for my reply to what he had said yesterday.

I said that we had come to the conclusion, in the Cabinet to-day, that we could not give any pledge at the present time. Though we should have to put our policy before Parliament, we could not pledge Parliament in advance. Up to the present moment, we did not feel, and public opinion did not feel, that any treaties or obligations of this country were involved. Further developments might alter this situation and cause the Government and Parliament to take the view that intervention was justified. The preservation of the neutrality of Belgium might be, I would not say a decisive, but an important factor, in determining our attitude. Whether we proposed to Parliament to intervene or not to intervene in a war, Parliament would wish to know how we stood with regard to the neutrality of Belgium, and it might be that I should ask both France and Germany whether each was prepared to undertake an engagement that she would not be the first to violate the neutrality of Belgium.

M. Cambon repeated his question whether we would help France if Germany made an attack on her.

I said that I could only adhere to the answer that, as far as things had gone at present, we could not take any engagement.

M. Cambon urged that Germany had from the beginning rejected proposals that might have made for peace. It could not be to England's interest that France should be crushed by Germany. We should then be in a very diminished position with regard to Germany. In 1870 we had made a great mistake in allowing an enormous increase of German strength, and we should now be repeating the

mistake. He asked me whether I could not submit his question to the Cabinet again.

I said that the Cabinet would certainly be summoned as soon as there was some new development, but at the present moment the only answer I could give was that we could not undertake any definite engagement.

I am, &c.,
E. GREY.

Sir E. Goschen to Sir Edward Grey.
(Received August 1st.)
Berlin,
July 31*st*, 1914.

NEUTRALITY of Belgium, referred to in your telegram of July 31st to Sir F. Bertie.

I have seen Secretary of State, who informs me that he must consult the Emperor and the Chancellor before he could possibly answer. I gathered from what he said that he thought any reply they might give could not but disclose a certain amount of their plan of campaign in the event of war ensuing, and he was therefore very doubtful whether they would return any answer at all. His Excellency, nevertheless, took note of your request.

It appears from what he said that German Government consider that certain hostile acts have already been committed by Belgium. As an instance of this, he alleged that a consignment of corn for Germany had been placed under an embargo already.

I hope to see his Excellency to-morrow again to discuss the matter further, but the prospect of obtaining a definite answer seems to me remote.

In speaking to me to-day the Chancellor made it clear that Germany would in any case desire to know the reply returned to you by the French Government.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

Foreign Office,

Sir, *August* 1*st*, 1914.

I TOLD the German Ambassador to-day that the reply of the German Government with regard to the neutrality of Belgium was a matter of very great regret, because the neutrality of Belgium affected feeling in this country. If Germany could see her way to give the same assurance as that which had been given by France it would materially contribute to relieve anxiety and tension here. On the other hand, if there were a violation of the neutrality of Belgium by one combatant while the other respected it, it would be extremely difficult to restrain public feeling in this country. I said that we had been discussing this question at a Cabinet meeting, and as I was authorised to tell him this I gave him a memorandum of it.

He asked me whether, if Germany gave a promise not to violate Belgium neutrality we would engage to remain neutral.

I replied that I could not say that; our hands were still free, and we were considering what our attitude should be. All I could say was that our attitude would be determined largely by public opinion here, and that the neutrality of Belgium would appeal very strongly to public opinion here. I did not think that we could give a promise of neutrality on that condition alone.

The Ambassador pressed me as to whether I could not formulate conditions on which we would remain neutral. He even suggested that the integrity of France and her colonies might be guaranteed.

I said that I felt obliged to refuse definitely any promise to remain neutral on similar terms, and I could only say that we must keep our hands free.

I am, &c.,

E. GREY.

The German Government "hedged" on the question of Belgium neutrality, and German troops struck at France through Luxemburg. The Luxemburg Minister of State telegraphed to Sir Edward Grey as follows:

(Translation.)
Luxemburg,
August 2nd, 1914.

The Luxemburg Minister of State has just received through the German Minister in Luxemburg, M. de Buch, a telegram from the Chancellor of the German Empire, Bethmann-Hollweg, to the effect that the military measures taken in Luxemburg do not constitute a hostile act against Luxemburg, but are only intended to insure against a possible attack of a French army. Full compensation will be paid to Luxemburg for any damage caused by using the railways which are leased to the Empire.

On Sunday, August 2nd, the news was received that Germany had declared war on Russia at midnight, and two English merchant ships were detained by the Germans in the Kiel Canal. All the Naval Reserves were called out; the Bank Rate was raised to ten per cent; and the King, at a special Privy Council, signed the proclamation authorising a partial moratorium. The proclamation ran as follows:

BY THE KING.
A PROCLAMATION
FOR POSTPONING THE PAYMENT OF CERTAIN BILLS OF EXCHANGE

GEORGE R.I.

Whereas in view of the critical situation in Europe and the financial difficulties caused thereby, it is

expedient that the payment of certain bills of exchange should be postponed as appears in this Proclamation:

Now, THEREFORE, We have thought fit, by and with the advice of Our Privy Council, to issue this Our Royal Proclamation, and We do hereby proclaim, direct, and ordain as follows:

If on the presentation for payment of a bill of exchange, other than a cheque or bill on demand, which has been accepted before the beginning of the fourth day of August, nineteen hundred and fourteen, the acceptor re-accepts the bill by a declaration on the face of the bill in the form set out hereunder, that bill shall, for all purposes, including the liability of any drawer or indorser or any other party thereto, be deemed to be due and be payable on a date one calendar month after the date of its original maturity instead of on the date of its original maturity, and to be a bill for the original amount thereof increased by the amount of interest thereon calculated from the date of re-acceptance to the new date of payment at the Bank of England rate current on the date of the re-acceptance of the Bill.

Form of Re-Acceptance.

Re-accepted under Proclamation for £ (*insert increased sum*).

Signature .....

Date .....

Given at Our Court at *Buckingham Palace*, this second day of August, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and fourteen, and in the Fifth year of Our Reign.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

The following statement was issued by the French Ambassador in London, M. Paul Cambon :

The whole responsibility for the present situation and anything that may eventuate rests with Germany. At the present moment Germany has not declared war against France, nor has the German Ambassador left Paris, yet German troops are invading French territory. Our pacific intentions may be judged from the fact that, although we knew of what was going on, we withdrew our troops ten kilometres from the frontier in order to prevent a conflict.

Germany's declaration of war against Russia was made while negotiations between the two Powers were actually in progress. That these conversations gave promise of success is shown by the fact that the Austrian Ambassador in Paris declared to our Foreign Minister that Russia and Austria were approaching an agreement. These facts speak for themselves.

It is also significant that, while these pourparlers were going on and there were hopes of a peaceful solution, the German Ambassador in Paris made it known that he was contemplating his departure. This (Saturday) morning the French Embassy gets official news that Luxemburg has been invaded, that German troops are marching on the town, and to the fortress of Longwy. The neutrality of Luxemburg is a perpetual neutrality guaranteed by a treaty signed at London in May, 1867. Lord Stanley, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, being the British plenipotentiary.

So from the beginning Germany has violated neutrality guaranteed by the whole of Europe. On July 29th, the German Ambassador in Paris warned M. Viviani that Germany was going to proclaim martial law. All the time France knew that

Germany was actually mobilising, yet it was not until five p.m. on August 1st that we gave orders for mobilisation. Previously we had taken the steps I have indicated by withdrawing our troops from the frontier to avoid collision with the German patrols.

It is as well that at the beginning the world should know these facts.

On Tuesday, August 4th, Dr. Dillon's last message from Vienna appeared :

Fate has willed it that this, my last message from Vienna, should be an announcement that events have unhappily verified the pessimistic forecast embodied in my first. I there stated, with adequate knowledge of all the decisive factors of the Austro-Servian crisis, that the Government of the Dual Monarchy would not brook Russian intervention, open or veiled, in its dealings with Servia. I said that the quarrel turns not upon the arrest and punishment of the undetected conspirators against the life of the Archduke, but is, frankly speaking, a question of might, the first trial of the issues between Slavism and Teutonism, which the German Chancellor foreshadowed in his speech in support of the war tax ; that the moment Russia mobilised her forces, not only Austria, but Germany also, would do likewise, and that this step would be almost tantamount to a crossing of the Rubicon which divides peace from war.

M. Sazonoff, it is affirmed, gave a positive assurance to the Austrian Ambassador, Count Szapary, that mobilisation would be restricted to the Southern Russian frontier, and consequently was directed only against the Austrian forces on the opposite side of that, whereas in reality an order for general mobilisation was issued, and the necessity imposed on both Central European Powers of proceeding to a general mobilisation likewise.

My own personal knowledge of M. Sazonoff absolutely forbids me to accept any story implying that he would utter, I do not say a deliberate misstatement, but even an assurance of which he was not perfectly certain himself. There must, therefore, be a misunderstanding somewhere.

Government circles here contemplate the situation as superlatively critical, and, in view of developments, and also because since half-past two o'clock yesterday only State telegrams can be despatched, and that from midnight to-night only recruits, troops, and horses can be conveyed by the railways, I am now leaving Vienna.

Before starting I talked this morning with the diplomatic representatives of the Entente Powers, who still entertain great hopes that the conflict can be localised and a general war avoided. This anticipation I am unable to share.

At the present moment Vienna resembles a hive of bees suddenly deprived of its queen. People are gathering in groups or masses, conversing eagerly, and discussing the prospects of taking leave of each other, or protesting angrily in the market places against the prohibitive prices of foodstuffs, which they themselves, by laying in large quantities, are contributing to raise.

The mood of the population is patriotic and dignified, but I cannot help noticing that the ebullient enthusiasm which marked yesterday's demonstrations has given way to grave preoccupation and consciousness of the unwonted gravity of the situation since a general mobilisation was ordered yesterday afternoon.

To-day everybody seems to feel that the life of Austria-Hungary as a State may depend upon the outcome of the impending struggle, and in any case the sacrifices of blood and money which it will impose

on the population far exceed anything foreseen when only Servia was pitted against the Dual Monarchy.

Even the Government here did not expect that events would take the course which all Europe is now deploring. They certainly recognised it as a contingency to be reckoned with, and they accordingly prepared for it. But they entertained hopes that a conflict would be restricted to the Balkan Peninsula. And it was not they who caused it to be extended. I know, with first-hand knowledge, that, if Austria had been allowed to fight it out with Servia, she would, of course, have adopted efficacious measures to prevent that Slav State from disturbing the tranquillity of its neighbours for a long time to come, but she harboured no intention to annex Servian territory or abolish Servian independence.

Whether Russia would have acquiesced in those efficacious measures may well be doubted, but at any rate they could have been discussed to some purpose after a campaign, when both sides would have been more disposed to listen to arguments for compromise than before. Aware of all this, I endeavoured in my messages to impress upon European mediators that a condition absolutely essential to the success of their exertions to localise the war would be to induce Russia to postpone mobilisation.

In every message I emphasised, what I knew to be certain, that a Russian mobilisation would be at once followed by that of Germany and Austria, and would render a general conflict almost inevitable.

Down to Wednesday noon the Austrian Government still believed the conflict would be kept within the original limits, and certain conversations were projected on the strength of that assumption.

On Thursday a sudden change came over the situation. This change was brought about by words and acts with which the Vienna Cabinet had

absolutely nothing to do. The Tsar had despatched a letter to the German Emperor soliciting his help as a friendly mediator. M. Sazonoff, whose good faith is above suspicion, is said to have assured the Austrian Ambassador that a general mobilisation was not contemplated. Another assurance was, it is affirmed, given to the Austrian military attaché that if troops were called to the colours it would be exclusively in the Southern Provinces, as a necessary measure of defence on the Russo-Austrian frontier, and that no such step would be taken elsewhere.

It is further asserted that, in spite of these deliberate assurances, and while Kaiser Wilhelm was exerting himself to get Austria to make sacrifices for the sake of peace, the German Ambassador in St. Petersburg announced that the Tsar had issued an order for general, not partial, mobilisation. These authoritative statements put an immediate end to the conversations that had been begun, and turned the attention of the German and Austrian Governments in the direction of war. The Kaiser proclaimed the German Empire in a state of war, and the Austro-Hungarian Government ordered the mobilisation of the remaining eight army corps.

Everybody will naturally inquire whether Russia's alleged mobilisation was really a fact, and, further, what motives warranted it at a moment when conversations were in progress. As all telegrams were stopped, the only information I have respecting Russia's alleged general mobilisation came from Berlin. The Tsar's Ambassador in Vienna was unaware of it. He knew that partial mobilisation had been decided upon some days before, and, believing that this would involve the abandonment by Austria of diplomatic relations, he had packed up his effects, and was quite ready to leave Vienna on July 29th, but, reassured by the resumption of conversations,

he unpacked his trunks and went to work anew in an optimistic spirit.

This spirit was shared by almost all his colleagues down to Saturday morning, or rather Friday night, when I informed some of them that I had grounds for regarding a general war as imminent, and had, consequently, resolved to quit Vienna.

On Friday the uneasiness in Government circles was intensified by the announcement made by the British Ambassador that our Government felt compelled to recall Admiral Troubridge from before Durazzo and Colonel Phillips from Scutari. This decision of the British Government, although explained satisfactorily on grounds of expediency, was interpreted as a symptom of the course which our policy would take in international complications. Colonel Phillips had to be withdrawn because he could no longer discharge the duty of hindering the Montenegrin raids on Albania without technically taking sides with one of the belligerents, and thus coming into conflict with international law. Admiral Troubridge's ship was required by the Admiralty in consequence of the critical situation.

These explanations were duly given and accepted, but the general impression remained. The British Ambassador, however, made it quite clear to Count Berchtold that our Foreign Office is minded to continue the discharge of its self-imposed duties of mediator between Austria-Hungary and Russia, and would meanwhile undertake nothing calculated to impair its influence for good with either side. It is worthy of note that the sudden change in the disposition of the Powers came from Berlin, which claimed to be in possession of early and trustworthy information respecting Russia's bellicose intentions and acts. How far this claim was founded I am unable to determine, but I am sure that various items of widely-circulated

unofficial news which was circulating in Bavaria and Prussia when I was travelling through these countries on Saturday and Sunday were wholly unfounded.

The moment the order was issued to mobilise the eight remaining Army Corps, the entire public and private life was radically disorganised in the Dual Monarchy. The run on the banks, especially the savings banks, was tremendous. Violent protests, accompanied by the destruction of fruit and eggs, were raised by the middle and poorer classes in the market-places against the high prices of food. Appeals were issued to the population, adjuring them to remain calm, and orders were given to tradesmen not to charge more than fair prices for the necessaries of life, under severe penalties.

So far as I could learn, mobilisation has been going forward most satisfactorily in all parts of the Empire. Some relatively slight incidents have occurred in the Slav provinces, which are but as dust in the balance. For example, in Salzburg, a reservist of Slav nationality refused to enter a military train. An officer commanded him to get in at once, but he remained obstinate, and exclaimed, "Rather than fight against my Slav brethren I would level my rifle against my commanding officer." Thereupon he was hurried off before a court martial and condemned summarily to be shot.

In Prague three soldiers held back on the ground they would not fight against Slavs. They were shot dead on the spot by their officers. In Buda-Pesth a sectarian of the so-called Nazarene faith refused to go to war on religious grounds. He, too, was tried, condemned, and shot. But the bulk of the men responded willingly to the call to arms, and the military chiefs apprehend no difficulty arising from the difference of nationalities, and have as yet experienced none. The Germans criticise the Austrian

method of mobilisation on the ground that it allows too little time for the formation of regiments, too many men being summoned to appear on the same day, whereas the German staff distributes the gathering of recruits and reservists over a much longer period, and enables each man to find his company and regiment almost without assistance.

In Germany I found iron discipline prevailing everywhere. From all parts of the Empire and Europe Reservists were hurrying to the colours, all of them willingly, some eagerly. There was no immoderate rejoicing and but little race hatred noticeable as yet, but quiet resolve to cripple Russia and France for a long time to come.

Stories, obviously invented, were published in special supplements of the daily prints or circulating among the people. Thus French officers had been discovered disguised as German officers. An electric launch had been found in the river guided by a German traitor, but down below fifteen Frenchmen were hiding with explosives to destroy a bridge over the Rhine. A French aviator had been hovering over the city of Nuremberg and dropped explosives in the direction of the railway, but had done no damage, and countless other imaginary incidents of a like character.

These tales, which are firmly believed by everybody, are kindling a feeling of bitterness against the Russians and the French, whose conduct, the people say, puts them outside the pale of civilisation. In the trains entering and leaving Cologne all the windows must be closed, as the soldiers guarding the bridge and access to the tunnels have orders to fire through open carriage windows, because the presumption is that they are left open to enable some enemy to throw explosives and demolish a bridge. At no railway station is the sale of alcoholic drinks permitted.

Austrian paper money is refused throughout Germany. One lady was offered twenty marks, or £1, for 100 kronen, which is more than four English sovereigns. I received for Napoleons twelve shillings each.

Notwithstanding the disorganisation of life in Germany the trains were running smoothly, but of course with enormous delays. I was struck with the perfect order which prevails everywhere in Germany, each man being aware of exactly what is expected of him, and doing that promptly, thoroughly, cheerfully. The manner in which the railways are worked commands admiration. Before leaving German territory all luggage undergoes a rigorous examination, lest cameras or plans of fortresses should be smuggled out.

A Reuter telegram from Berlin gave quotations from the German White Book, and the text of the messages between the Kaiser and the Tsar:

Berlin,
August 3rd.

The German Government to-day published the White Book regarding the events which led up to the war. This White Book will be laid before the Reichstag to-morrow. Among a profusion of interesting material which it contains is the following highly-important report on the last stages of the negotiations. The German Government writes:

"We have worked shoulder to shoulder with England uninterruptedly in mediatory action, and supported every proposal in Vienna from which we thought we could hope for a possibility of a peaceful solution of the conflict. As early as July 30th we forwarded to Vienna the British proposal, which as a basis of negotiations laid down that Austria-Hungary ought, after the invasion of Servia, which had

taken place, to dictate her conditions there. We had to assume that Russia would accept this basis.

"During the time from July 29th to July 31st, while these efforts of ours for mediation were being supported by British diplomacy and carried on with increasing urgency, came constantly-increasing news of mobilisatory measures and assembling of troops by Russia on the East Prussian frontier. The proclamation of a state of war at all the important points of the Russian western frontier left no doubt that a Russian mobilisation against us also was in full progress, while at the same time all such measures were repeatedly and solemnly denied before our representative in St. Petersburg. Even before Vienna's answer to the last British and German mediation proposal—of which the terms must have been made known in St. Petersburg—could reach Berlin, Russia had ordered a general mobilisation.

"During the same days an exchange of telegrams took place between his Majesty the Emperor and the Tsar Nicholas, in which his Majesty the Emperor called the attention of the Tsar to the menacing character of the Russian mobilisation and to the continuance of his own activity in the direction of mediation. On July 31st the Tsar sent to the Emperor the following telegram:

> "I thank thee from my heart for the mediation, which leaves a gleam of hope that even now all may end peacefully. It is technically impossible to discontinue our military operations, which are rendered necessary by Austria's mobilisation. We are far from wishing for war, and so long as the negotiations with Austria regarding Servia continue, my troops will not undertake any provocative action. I give thee

my word upon it. I trust with all my strength in God's grace, and I hope for the success of thy mediation at Vienna, and for the welfare of our countries and the peace of Europe.

Thy most devoted

NICHOLAS."

To this the Emperor replied as follows:

"In answer to thy appeal to my friendship and thy prayer for my help I undertook mediatory action between the Austro-Hungarian Government and thine. While this action was in progress thy troops were mobilising against my ally, Austria-Hungary, in consequence of which, as I have already informed thee, my mediation was rendered nearly illusory. Nevertheless, I have continued it.

"Now, however, I receive trustworthy news of your serious preparations for war even on my eastern frontier. The responsibility for the safety of my kingdom compels me to take definite retaliatory measures. My efforts to maintain the peace of the world have now reached their utmost possible limit.

"It will not be I who am responsible for the calamity which threatens the whole civilised world. Even at this moment it lies in thy power to avert it. Nobody threatens the honour and power of Russia, which could well have waited for the result of my mediation. The friendship which I inherited from my grandfather on his deathbed for thee and thy kingdom has always been holy to me. I have remained true to Russia whenever she has been in sore straits, and especially during her last war. The peace of Europe can still be maintained by thee if Russia decides to

cease her military measures, which threaten Germany and Austria-Hungary."

The following is a report of the proceedings in the House of Commons on the fateful Monday:

SIR E. GREY: Last week I stated that we were working for peace, not only for this country but to preserve the peace of Europe. To-day—events move so rapidly it is exceedingly difficult to state with technical accuracy the actual state of affairs—it is clear that the peace of Europe cannot be preserved. Russia and Germany, at any rate, have declared war with each other. Before I proceed to state the position of his Majesty's Government and what our attitude is with regard to the present crisis I would like to clear the ground, that the House may know exactly under what obligations the Government is, or the House can be said to be, in coming to a decision in the matter. First of all, let me say very shortly that we have consistently worked with a single mind, and with all the earnestness in our power, to preserve peace. The House may be satisfied on that point. We have always done it; and in these last years, as far as his Majesty's Government is concerned, we shall have no difficulty in proving we have done it. Through the Balkan crisis, by general admission, we worked for peace. Well, the co-operation of the Great Powers of Europe was successful in working for peace in the Balkan crisis. It is true that some of the Powers had great difficulty in adjusting their point of view. It took much time, labour, and discussion before they could settle their differences, but peace was secured because peace was their main object and they were willing to give time and trouble rather than accentuate differences rapidly.

In the present crisis it has not been possible to secure the peace of Europe, because there has been

little time, and there has been a disposition, at any rate in some quarters, on which I will not dwell, to force things rapidly to an issue, at any rate to the great risk of peace. As we now know, the result of that is that the policy of peace as far as the Great Powers generally are concerned, has failed. I do not want to dwell on that or to comment upon it and say where the blame seems to us to lie and which Powers were most in favour of peace and which were most disposed to risk or endanger peace, because I would like the House to approach this crisis in which we now are from the point of view of British interests, British honour, and British obligations, free from all passion. We shall publish papers as soon as we can regarding what took place last week when we were working for peace, and when those papers are published I have no doubt that to every human being they will make it clear how strenuous and genuine and whole-hearted our own efforts for peace were, and they will enable people to form their own judgment upon what forces were at work which operated against peace.

Now I come first to the question of British obligations. I have assured the House and the Prime Minister has assured the House more than once, that if any crisis such as this arose we should come before the House of Commons and be able to say that it was free to decide what the British attitude should be—that we would have no secret engagement to spring upon the House and tell the House that because we had entered into that engagement there was an obligation of honour on the country. I will deal with that point and clear the ground first. There have been in Europe two diplomatic groups—the Triple Alliance and what has come to be known for some years as the Triple Entente. The Triple Entente was not an alliance; it was a diplomatic group.

The House will remember that in 1908 there was a crisis, a Balkan crisis, which originated in the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Russian Minister, M. Izvolsky, came to London—his visit had been planned before the crisis broke out—and I told him definitely then that this being a Balkan affair I did not consider that public opinion in this country would justify us in promising him anything more than diplomatic support. More was never asked from us, more was never given, and more was never promised. In this present crisis up till yesterday we had also given no promise of anything more than diplomatic support. Up till yesterday no promise of anything more than diplomatic support was given.

Now to make this question of obligation clear to the House I must go back to the Morocco crisis of 1906. That was the time of the Algeciras Conference. It came at a time very difficult for his Majesty's Government, when a General Election was in progress. Ministers were scattered all over the country, and I was spending three days a week in my constituency and three days at the Foreign Office. I was asked whether if that crisis developed and there were war between France and Germany we would give armed support. I said then that I could promise nothing to any foreign Power unless it was subsequently to receive the whole-hearted support of public opinion here when the occasion arose. I said that in my opinion if a war were forced upon France then on the question of Morocco—a question which had just been the subject of agreement between this country and France—an agreement exceedingly popular on both sides—if out of that agreement war were forced upon France at that time the public opinion of this country, I thought, would rally to the material support of France. I expressed that opinion, but I gave no promise. I expressed that opinion throughout that

crisis, so far as I remember, almost in the same words to the French Ambassador and the German Ambassador. I made no promise and I used no threat.

That position was accepted by the French Government, but they said to me at the time, and I think very reasonably, " If you think it possible that public opinion in Great Britain might, when a sudden crisis arose, justify you in giving to France the armed support which you cannot promise in advance, then, unless between military and naval experts some conversations have taken place, you will not be able to give that support, even if you wish to give it, when the time comes." There was force in that. I agreed to it and authorised the conversations to take place, but on the distinct understanding that nothing which passed between the military and naval experts should bind either Government or restrict in any way their freedom to come to a decision as to whether or not they would give their support when the time arose. I have told the House that on that occasion a General Election was in progress. I had to take the responsibility without the Cabinet. It could not be summoned, and an answer had to be given. I consulted Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, the then Prime Minister. I consulted Lord Haldane, who was Secretary for War, and I consulted the present Prime Minister, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer. That was the most I could do. I was authorised, but on the distinct understanding that it left the hands of the Government free whenever a crisis arose. The fact that conversations between naval and military experts took place was later on—I think much later, because that crisis had passed and ceased to be of importance—brought to the knowledge of the Cabinet. Another Morocco crisis, the Agadir crisis, came, and throughout that I took precisely the same line as in 1906.

Subsequently, in 1912, after a discussion of the situation in the Cabinet, it was decided that we ought to have a definite understanding in writing, though it was only in the form of an unofficial letter, that these conversations were not binding on the freedom of either Government. On November 22nd, 1912, I wrote to the French Ambassador the letter which I will now read to the House, and I received from him a letter in similar terms in reply. The letter which I have to read will be known to the public now as a record that whatever took place between military and naval experts, they were not binding engagements on the Government. This is the letter:

> My dear Ambassador,—From time to time in recent years French and British naval and military experts have consulted together. It has always been understood that such consultation does not restrict the freedom of either Government to decide at any future time whether or not to assist the other by armed force. We have agreed that consultation between experts is not and ought not to be regarded as an engagement which commits either Government to action in a contingency which has not yet arisen and may never arise. The disposition, for instance, of the French and British Fleets respectively at the present moment is not based on an engagement to co-operate in war. You have, however, pointed out that if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power it might become essential to know whether in that event it could depend on the armed assistance of the other. I agree that if either Government had grave reason to expect an unprovoked attack by a third Power or something which threatened the general peace it should immediately discuss with the other whether both

> Governments should act together to prevent aggression and to preserve peace, and, if so, what measures they would be prepared to take in common.

That is the starting point for the Government with regard to the present crisis. I think it makes it clear that what the Prime Minister and I have said in the House of Commons was perfectly justified as regards our freedom to decide in a crisis what our line should be—whether we should intervene or abstain. The Government remained perfectly free, and *a fortiori* the House of Commons remained perfectly free. That I say to clear the ground from the point of view of obligations, and I think it was due to prove our good faith to the House of Commons, that I should give that full information to the House now and say, what I think is obvious from the letter I have just read, that we do not construe anything which has previously taken place in our diplomatic relations with other Powers in this matter as restricting the freedom of the Government to decide what attitude they shall take now or restricting the freedom of the House of Commons to decide what their attitude shall be. I will go further and say this: that the situation in the present crisis is not precisely the same as it was on the Morocco question. In the Morocco question it was primarily a dispute which concerned France. It was a dispute, as it seemed to us, fastened upon France out of an agreement subsisting between us and France and published to the whole world, under which we engaged to give France diplomatic support. We were pledged to nothing more than diplomatic support, but we were definitely pledged by a definite public agreement to side with France diplomatically on that question.

The present crisis has originated differently. It has not originated in connection with Morocco or in

connection with anything as to which we have a special agreement with France. It has not originated in anything which primarily concerns France. It originated in a dispute between Austria and Servia. I can say this with the most absolute confidence, that no Government and no country had less desire to be involved in the dispute between Austria and Servia than the Government and country of France. They are involved in it because of their obligations of honour under their definite alliance with Russia. It is only fair to say that that obligation of honour cannot apply in the same way to us. We are not parties to the Franco-Russian Alliance. We do not even know the terms of it. So far I have, I think, faithfully and completely cleared the ground with regard to the question of obligation.

I now come to what the situation requires of us. We have had for many years a long-standing friendship with France.

I remember well the feeling of the House and my own feeling, for I spoke on the subject, when the late Government made their agreement with France—the warm and cordial feeling resulting from the fact that these two nations who had had perpetual differences in the past had cleared those differences away. I remember saying that it seemed to me that some benign influence had been at work to produce the cordial atmosphere which had made that possible. But how far that friendship entails obligations—and it has been a friendship between the two nations ratified by the nations—how far that friendship entails obligations let every man look into his own heart and feelings and construe the extent of the obligations himself. I construe it myself as I feel it, but I do not wish to urge upon anybody else more than their feelings dictate as to all that they should feel about the obligations. The House individually

and collectively may judge for itself. Now I speak from the point of view of my own personal feeling. The French Fleet is in the Mediterranean. The northern and western coasts of France are absolutely unprotected. When the French Fleet came to be concentrated in the Mediterranean there was a situation very different from what it used to be, because the friendship which has grown up between the two countries has given France a sense of security that there is nothing to be feared from us. Her coasts are absolutely undefended. Her fleet is in the Mediterranean, and has for some years been concentrated there, because of the feeling of confidence and friendship which has existed between the two countries.

My own feeling is this—that if a foreign fleet engaged in a war which France had not sought and in which she had not been the aggressor came down the English Channel and bombarded and battered the undefended coasts of France we could not stand aside and see such a thing going on practically within sight of our eyes, with our arms folded, looking on dispassionately, doing nothing, and I believe that would be the feeling of this country. There are times when one's own individual sentiments make one feel that if these circumstances actually did arise that feeling would spread with irresistible force throughout the land. But I want to look at the thing also without sentiment from the point of view of British interests, and it is on that that I am going to base and justify what I presently am going to say to the House. If we are to say anything at this moment, what is France to do with her fleet in the Mediterranean? If she leaves it there with no statement from us as to what we will do she leaves her northern and western coasts absolutely undefended, at the mercy of a German Fleet coming down the Channel to do as it pleases in a war which is a war of life and death

between them. If we say nothing, it may be that the French Fleet will be withdrawn from the Mediterranean. We are in the presence of a European conflagration. Can anybody set limits to the consequences which may arise out of it ? Let us assume that to-day we stand aside in an attitude of neutrality, saying : " No, we cannot undertake and engage to help either party in this conflict " ; let us assume that the French Fleet is withdrawn from the Mediterranean. The consequences are tremendous of what has already happened in Europe, even in countries which are at peace—in fact, equally whether countries are at peace or at war. Let us assume that out of that come consequences unforeseen, which make it necessary at a sudden moment that in defence of vital British interests we should go to war. And let us assume—which is quite possible—that Italy, who is now neutral —because as I understand she considers that this war is an aggressive war, and that the Triple Alliance, being a defensive alliance, her obligations do not arise—let us assume that consequences which are now not foreseen, perfectly legitimately consulting her own interests, should make Italy depart from her attitude of neutrality at a time when we are forced in defence of vital British interests to fight ourselves, what will be the position in the Mediterranean then ? It might be that at some critical moment those consequences would be forced upon us when the trade routes in the Mediterranean might be vital to this country. Nobody can say that in the course of the next few weeks there is any particular trade route, the opening of which may not be vital to this country. What will be our position then ? We have not kept a fleet in the Mediterranean, which is equal to deal with a combination of other fleets alone in the Mediterranean, and as that would be the very moment when we could not detach more ships for the

Mediterranean we might have exposed this country, from our negative attitude at the present moment, to the most appalling risk.

In these circumstances, from the point of view of British interests, we felt strongly that France was entitled to know at once whether or not in the event of an attack upon her unprotected northern and western coasts she could depend on British support. In that emergency and in these compelling circumstances yesterday afternoon I gave to the French Ambassador the following statement:

> I am authorised to give the assurance that if the German Fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against the French coast or shipping the British Fleet will give all the protection in its power.

This assurance is, of course, subject to the policy of his Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding his Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency or action of the German Fleet takes place. I read that to the House not as a declaration of war on our part, not as entailing immediate aggressive action on our part, but as binding us to take aggressive action should that contingency arise. Things move very hurriedly from hour to hour, fresh news comes in, and I cannot give this in any very formal way; but I understand that the German Government would be prepared if we would pledge ourselves to neutrality to agree that its fleet would not attack the northern coast of France. I have only heard that shortly before I came to the House, but that is far too narrow an engagement for us.

And there is the very serious consideration, becoming more serious every hour—there is the question of the neutrality of Belgium. I shall have to put before

the House at some length what our position in regard to Belgium is. The governing factor is the Treaty of 1839, but this is a Treaty with a history which has accumulated since. In 1870 when there was war between France and Germany the question of the neutrality of Belgium arose and various things were said. Amongst other things Prince Bismarck gave an assurance to Belgium — that confirming his verbal assurance—he gave in writing a declaration which he said was superfluous in reference to the Treaty in existence—that the German Confederation and its allies would respect the neutrality of Belgium, it being always understood that that neutrality would be respected by the other belligerent Powers. That is valuable as a recognition in 1870 on the part of Germany of the sacredness of these Treaty rights. What was our own attitude? The people who laid down the attitude of the British Government were Lord Granville in the House of Lords and Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons. Lord Granville on the 8th of August used these words. He said:

> We might have explained to the country and to foreign nations that we did not think this country was bound either morally or internationally, or that its interests were concerned in the maintenance of the neutrality of Belgium; though this course might have had some convenience, though it might have been easy to adhere to it, though it might have saved us from some immediate danger, it is a course which her Majesty's Government thought it impossible to adopt in the name of the country with any due regard to the country's honour and the country's interests.

Mr. Gladstone spoke as follows two days later:

> There is, I admit, the obligation of the Treaty. It is not necessary nor would time permit me to

enter into the complicated question of the nature of the obligation under that Treaty. But I am not able to subscribe to the doctrine of those who have held in this House what plainly amounts to the assertion that the simple fact of the existence of a guarantee is binding on every party to-day irrespectively altogether of the particular position in which it may find itself at the time when the occasion for acting on the guarantee arises. The great authorities upon foreign policy to whom I have been accustomed to listen, such as Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston, never to my knowledge took that rigid and, if I may venture to say so, that impracticable view of the guarantee. The circumstance that there is already an existing guarantee in force is of necessity an important fact, and a weighty element in the case to which we are bound to give full and ample consideration. There is also this further consideration, the force of which we must all feel most deeply, and that is the common interest against the unmeasured aggrandisement of any Power whatever.

Well, the Treaty is an old Treaty—1839. That was the view taken of it in 1870. It is one of those Treaties which are founded not only out of consideration for Belgium, which benefits under the Treaty, but in the interests of those who guarantee the neutrality of Belgium. The honour and interest is at least as strong to-day as it was in 1870, and we cannot take a more narrow view or a less serious view of our obligations and of the importance of those obligations than was taken by Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1870.

Now I will read to the House what took place last week on this subject. When mobilisation was beginning I knew that this question must be a

most important element in our policy, a most important subject for the House of Commons. I telegraphed at the same time in similar terms to both Paris and Berlin to say that it was essential for us to know whether the French and German Governments respectively were prepared to undertake an engagement to respect the neutrality of Belgium. These are the replies. I got from the French Government this :

> The French Government are resolved to respect the neutrality of Belgium, and it would only be in the event of some other Power violating that neutrality that France might find herself under the necessity in order to assure the defence of her security to act otherwise. This assurance has been given several times. The President of the Republic spoke of it to the King of the Belgians, and the French Minister at Brussels has spontaneously renewed the assurance to the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs to-day.

From the German Government the reply was :

> The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs could not possibly give an answer before consulting the Emperor and the Chancellor.

Sir Edward Goschen, to whom I had said it was important to have an answer soon, said he hoped the answer would not be too long delayed. The German Minister for Foreign Affairs then gave Sir Edward Goschen to understand that he rather doubted whether they could answer at all, as any reply they might give could not fail in the event of war to have the undesirable effect of disclosing to a certain extent part of their plan of campaign. I telegraphed at the same time to Brussels to the Belgian Government, and I got the following reply from Sir Francis Villiers :

> The Minister for Foreign Affairs thanks me for the communication and replies that Belgium will, to the utmost of her power, maintain neutrality

and expects and desires other Powers to observe and uphold it. He begged me to add that the relations between Belgium and the neighbouring Powers was excellent, and there was no reason to suspect their intentions, but that the Belgian Government believed that in the case of violation they were in a position to defend the neutrality of their country.

It now appears from the news I have received to-day which has come quite recently—and I am not yet quite sure how far it has reached me in an accurate form—that an ultimatum has been given to Belgium by Germany, the object of which was to offer Belgium friendly relations with Germany on condition that she would facilitate the passage of German troops through Belgium. Well, until one has these things absolutely definitely up to the last moment, I do not wish to say all that one would say if one was in a position to give the House full, complete, and absolute information upon the point. We were sounded once in the course of last week as to whether if a guarantee was given that after the war Belgian integrity would be preserved that would content us. We replied that we could not bargain away whatever interests or obligations we had in Belgian neutrality. Shortly before I reached the House I was informed that the following telegram had been received from the King of the Belgians by King George:

> Remembering the numerous proofs of your Majesty's friendship and that of your predecessor and the friendly attitude of England in 1870 and the proof of friendship you have just given us again, I make a supreme appeal to the diplomatic intervention of your Majesty's Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium.

Diplomatic intervention took place last week on our part. What can diplomatic intervention do now?

We have great and vital interests in the independence of Belgium, and integrity is the least part. If Belgium is compelled to submit to allow her neutrality to be violated, of course the situation is clear. Even if by agreement she admitted the violation of her neutrality, it is clear she could only do so under duress. The smaller States in that region of Europe ask but one thing: their one desire is that they should be left alone and independent. The one thing they fear is, I think, not so much that their integrity should be interfered with, but their independence. If in this war which is before Europe, one of the combatants should violate its neutrality and no action should be taken to resent it, at the end of the war, whatever the integrity may be, the independence will be gone. I have one further quotation from Mr. Gladstone as to what he thought about the independence of Belgium. He said:

> We have an interest in the independence of Belgium which is wider than that we have in the literal operation of the guarantee. It is found in the answer to the question whether under the circumstances of the case this country, endowed as it is with influence and power, would quietly stand by and witness the perpetration of the direst crime that ever stained the pages of history, and thus become participators in the sin.

No, if it be the case that there has been anything in the nature of an ultimatum to Belgium, asking her to compromise or violate her neutrality, whatever may have been offered to her in return, her independence is gone if that holds, and, if her independence goes, the independence of Holland will follow.

I ask the House, from the point of view of British interests, to consider what may be at stake. If France, beaten in a struggle of life and death, beaten to her knees, loses her position as a Great Power and

becomes subordinate to the will and power of one greater than herself—consequences which I do not anticipate, because I am sure that France has the power to defend herself with all the energy and ability and patriotism which she has shown so often—still, if that were to happen, and if Belgium fell under the same dominating influence, and then Holland, and then Denmark, then would not Mr. Gladstone's words come true, that there would be "a common interest against the unmeasured aggrandisement of any Power"? And that Power would be opposite to us. It may be said, I suppose, that we might stand aside, husband our strength, and, whatever happened in the course of this war, at the end of it intervene with effect to put things right and to adjust them to our own point of view. If, in a crisis like this, we run away from these obligations of honour and interest as regards the Belgian Treaty, I doubt whether, whatever material force we might have at the end, it would be of very much value in face of the respect that we should have lost. And do not believe, whether a Great Power stands outside this war or not, it is going to be in a position at the end of this war to exert its material strength. For us, with a powerful Fleet, which we believe able to protect our commerce and to protect our shores, and to protect our interests if we are engaged in war, we shall suffer but little more than we shall suffer if we stand aside. We are going to suffer, I am afraid, terribly in this war, whether we are in it or whether we stand outside. Foreign trade is going to stop, not because the trade routes are closed, but because there is no other trade at the other end. Continental nations engaged in war, all their populations, all their energies, all their wealth, engaged in a desperate struggle, they cannot carry on the trade with us that they are carrying on in times of peace, whether we are parties to the war or whether we are not. At

the end of this war, whether we have stood aside or whether we have been engaged in it, I do not believe for a moment, even if we had stood aside and remained aside, that we should be in a position, a material position, to use our force decisively to undo what had happened in the course of the war to prevent the whole of the west of Europe opposite to us, if that had been the result of the war, falling under the domination of a single Power.

Now, I have put the question of Belgium somewhat hypothetically, because I am not yet sure of all the facts, but, if the facts turn out to be as they have reached us at present, it is quite clear that there is an obligation on this country to do its utmost to prevent the consequences to which those facts will lead if they are undisputed. I have read to the house the only engagement that we have yet taken definitely with regard to the use of force. I think it is due to the House to say that we have taken no engagement yet with regard to sending an expeditionary armed force out of the country. Mobilisation of the Fleet has taken place; mobilisation of the Army is taking place, but we have as yet taken no engagement, because I do feel that in the case of a European conflagration such as this, unprecedented, with our enormous responsibilities in India and other parts of the Empire, or in countries in British occupation, with all the unknown factors, we must take very carefully into consideration the use which we make of sending an expeditionary force out of the country until we know how we stand. One thing I would say, the one bright spot in the whole of this terrible situation is Ireland. The general feeling throughout Ireland—and I would like this to be clearly understood abroad—does not make that a consideration that we feel we have to take into account. I have told the House how far we have at present gone in

commitments, the conditions which influence our policy, and I have dwelt at length to the House upon how vital the condition of the neutrality of Belgium is. What other policy is there before the House?

There is but one way in which the Government could make certain at the present moment of keeping outside this war, and that would be that it should immediately issue a proclamation of unconditional neutrality. We cannot do that; we have made a commitment to France which I have read to the House which prevents us from doing that. We have got the consideration of Belgium which prevents us also from any unconditional neutrality, and without those conditions absolutely satisfied and satisfactory, we are bound not to shrink from proceeding to the use of all the forces in our power. If we did take that line, and said we will have nothing whatever to do with this matter under any conditions—the Belgian Treaty obligations, the possible position in the Mediterranean, the damage to British interests, and what may happen to France from our failure to support France—if we were to say that all these things mattered nothing, were as nothing, and to say we would stand aside, we should, I believe, sacrifice our respect and good name and reputation before the world. And we should not escape the most serious and grave economic consequences. My object has been to explain the view of the Government and to place before the House the issue and the choice. I do not for a moment conceal, after what I have said and after the information, incomplete as it is, that I have given to the House with regard to Belgium, that we must be prepared, and we are prepared, for the consequence of having to use all the strength we have at any moment, we know not how soon, to de end ourselves and to take our part. We know,

if the facts all be as I have stated them, though I have announced no impending aggressive action on our part, no final decision to resort to force at a moment's notice until we know the whole of the case, that the use of it may be forced upon us.

As far as the forces of the Crown are concerned, we are ready. I believe the Prime Minister and my right hon. friend the first Lord of the Admiralty have no doubt whatever that the readiness and the efficiency of those Forces were never at a higher mark than they are to-day, and never was there a time when confidence was more justified in the power of the navy to protect our commerce and to protect our shores. The thought is with us always of the suffering and misery entailed, which no country in Europe will escape, and from which no application of neutrality will save us. The amount of harm that can be done by an enemy's ships to our trade is infinitesimal compared with the amount of harm that must be done by the economic conditions caused on the Continent. The most awful responsibility rests upon the Government in deciding what to advise the House of Commons to do. We have disclosed our mind to the House of Commons; we have disclosed the issue and the information which we have, and made clear to the House, I trust, that we are prepared to face that situation, and that should it develop, as it seems probable to develop, we will face it. We worked for peace up to the last moment and beyond the last moment. How hard, how persistently, and how earnestly we strove for peace last week the House will see from the papers that are before it. But that is over so far as the peace of Europe is concerned. We are now face to face with a situation and all the consequences which it may yet have to unfold. We believe we shall have the support of the House at large in proceeding to whatever

consequences, to whatever measures may be forced upon us by the development of facts or action taken by others. I believe the country, so quickly has the situation been forced upon it, has not had time to realise the issue. It is, perhaps, still thinking of the quarrel between Austria and Servia. The absurd complications of this matter which have grown out of the quarrel between Austria and Servia! Russia and Germany, we know, are at war; we do not yet know officially if Austria, the ally whom Germany is to support, is at war with Russia. We know that a good deal has been happening on the French frontier. We do not know that the German Ambassador has left Paris. The situation has developed so rapidly that technically, as regards the conditions of war, it is most difficult to describe what has actually happened. I wanted to bring out the underlying things which would affect our own conduct and our own policy, and to put them clearly. I have put these vital facts before the House, and if, as seems only too probable, we are forced, and rapidly forced, to take our stand upon those issues, then I believe, when the country realises what is at stake, what the real issues are, the magnitude of the impending dangers in the West of Europe which I have endeavoured to describe to the House, then I believe we shall be supported throughout, not only by the House of Commons, but by the determination and the resolution, the courage and the endurance of the whole country.

Mr. BONAR LAW said: The right hon. gentleman has made an appeal for support, and it is necessary that I should say a word or two, but they shall be very few. I wish to say in the first place that I do not believe there is a single member in the House who doubts that, not only the right hon. gentleman himself, but the Government which he represents, have

done everything in their power up to the last moment to preserve peace, and I think we may be sure that, if any other course is taken, it is because it is forced upon them, and that they have absolutely no alternative. The right hon. gentleman spoke of the bright spot in the picture which only a day or two ago was a black spot on the political horizon. Everything that he has said, I am sure, is true, but I should like to say this further—that if the contingencies which he has not put into words, but which are in all our minds as possible, arise, then we have already had indications that there is another bright spot, and that every one of his Majesty's Dominions beyond the seas will be behind us in whatever action it is necessary to take. This only I shall say. The Government already know, but I give them now the assurance on behalf of the party of which I am the leader in this House, that, in whatever steps they think it necessary to take for the honour and security of this country, they can rely upon the unhesitating support of the Opposition.

Mr. J. REDMOND said: I hope the House will not consider it improper on my part in the grave circumstances in which we are assembled if I intervene for a very few moments. I was moved a great deal by that sentence in the speech of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs in which he said that the one bright spot in the situation was the changed feeling in Ireland. In past times, when this Empire has been engaged in these terrible enterprises, it is true—it would be the utmost affectation and folly on my part to deny it—the sympathy of the Nationalists of Ireland, for reasons to be found deep down in centuries of history, have been estranged from this country. Allow me to say that what has occurred in recent years has altered the situation completely. I must not touch, and I may be trusted not to touch, on any

controversial topic; but this I may be allowed to say, that wider knowledge of the real facts of Irish history has, I think, altered the view of the democracy of this country towards the Irish question, and to-day I honestly believe that the democracy of Ireland will turn with the utmost anxiety and sympathy to this country in every trial and every danger that may overtake it. There is a possibility, at any rate, of history repeating itself. The House will remember that in 1778, at the end of the disastrous American War, when it might, I think, truly be said that the military power of this country was almost at its lowest ebb, and when the shores of Ireland were threatened with foreign invasion, a body of 100,000 Irish volunteers sprang into existence for the purpose of defending her shores. At first no Catholic—ah, how sad the reading of the history of those days is!—was allowed to be enrolled in that body of volunteers, and yet from the very first day the Catholics of the South subscribed money and sent it towards the arming of their Protestant fellow-countrymen.

Ideas widened as time went on, and finally the Catholics in the South were armed and enrolled, brothers-in-arms with their fellow-countrymen of a different creed in the North. May history repeat itself! To-day there are in Ireland two large bodies of volunteers. One of them sprang into existence in the North. Another has sprung into existence in the South. I say to the Government that they may to-morrow withdraw every one of their troops from Ireland. I say that the coast of Ireland will be defended from foreign invasion by her armed sons, and for this purpose armed Nationalist Catholics in the South will be only too glad to join arms with armed Protestant Ulstermen in the North. And is it too much to hope that out of this situation there may

spring a result which will be good, not merely for the Empire, but for the future welfare and integrity of the Irish nation? I ought to apologise for having intervened, but while Irishmen generally are in favour of peace, and would desire to save the democracy of this country from all the horrors of war—while we would make every possible sacrifice for that purpose, still, if the dire necessity is forced upon this country, we offer to the Government of the day that they may take their troops away, and that, if it is allowed to us in comradeship with our brethren in the North, we will ourselves defend the coasts of our country.

Mr. RAMSAY MACDONALD: I should have, had circumstances permitted, preferred to remain silent this afternoon. But circumstances do not permit of that. I shall model what I have to say on the two speeches we have listened to, and I shall be brief. The right hon. gentleman, to a House which in a great majority is with him, has delivered a speech the echoes of which will go down in history. The speech has been impressive. However much we may resist the conclusion, we have not been able to resist the moving character of his appeal. I think he is wrong. I think the Government which he represents and for which he speaks is wrong. I think the verdict of history will be that they are wrong. We shall see. The effect of the right hon. gentleman's speech in this house is not to be its final effect. There will be opportunities, or there may not be opportunities, for us to go into details. But I want to say to this House, and to say without equivocation, that if the right hon. gentleman had come here to-day and told us that our country was in danger, I do not care what party he appealed to or what class he appealed to, we would be with him and behind him. If this is so we will vote him what money he wants. Yes, and we will go further. We will offer him ourselves if the country

is in danger. But he has not persuaded me that it is. He has not persuaded my hon. friends who co-operate with me that it is. I am perfectly certain, when his speech gets into cold print to-morrow, he will not persuade a large section of the country. If the nation's honour is in danger we would be with him. There has been no crime committed by statesmen of this character without those statesmen appealing to their nation's honour. We fought the Crimean War because of our honour. We rushed to South Africa because of our honour. The right hon. gentleman is appealing to us to-day because of our honour. There is a third point. If the right hon. gentleman could come to us and tell us that a small European nationality like Belgium is in danger, and could assure us he is going to confine the conflict to that question, then we would support him. What is the use of talking about coming to the aid of Belgium when, as a matter of fact, you are engaging in a whole European war which is not going to leave the map of Europe in the position it is in now? The right hon. gentleman said nothing about Russia. We will want to know about that. We want to try to find out what is going to happen when it is all over to the power of Russia in Europe, and we are not going to go blindly into this conflict without having some sort of a rough idea as to what is going to happen. Finally so far as France is concerned, we say solemnly and definitely that no such friendship as the right hon. gentleman described between one nation and another could ever justify one of those nations entering into war on behalf of the other. If France is really in danger, if, as the result of all this, we are going to have the power, civilisation, and genius of France removed from European history, then let him say so. It is an impossible conception, and we are talking about it and never justifying the action which the

right hon. gentleman has foreshadowed. I not only know, I feel the feeling of the House is against us. I have been in this before; and 1906 came as part recompense. It will come again. We are going to go through it all. We will go through it all. So far as we are concerned, whatever may happen, whatever may be said about us, whatever attacks may be made upon us, we will take the action that we will take and say that this country should have remained neutral, because, in the deepest parts of our hearts we believed that that was right, and that that alone was consistent with the honour of the country and the traditions of the party now in office.

The SPEAKER left the Chair at twenty-five minutes to five, and the sitting was suspended.

At the sitting of the House in the evening Sir E. GREY said: I only want to give to the House some information which I have received, and which was not in my possession when I made a statement this afternoon. This information I have received since the House rose, from the Belgian Legation in London: "Germany sent yesterday evening at seven o'clock a Note proposing to Belgium friendly neutrality covering a free passage through Belgian territory, and promising the maintenance of the independence of the Kingdom and possessions at the conclusion of peace, and threatening in case of refusal to treat Belgium as an enemy. A time limit of twelve hours was fixed for a reply. Belgians answered that an attack on their neutrality would be a flagrant violation of the rights of nations, and that to accept the German proposal would sacrifice the honour of a nation conscious of its duty. Belgium is firmly resolved to repel aggression by all possible means." Of course, I can only say that His Majesty's Government will take into grave consideration the information it has received. I make no further comment.

Later, Mr. BALFOUR said: I do not rise to continue the arguments on the policy of the Government announced so eloquently and so admirably by the Foreign Secretary this afternoon. The hon. member who has just spoken expressed regret that there should have been a series of speeches delivered here, one after another, which might give, I will not say to the public of this country but to people in foreign countries who are less acquainted with our Parliamentary procedure and the weight and value of particular Parliamentary transactions, a very different impression to the general view this House takes and the view of those this House represents. I hope the hon. gentleman is wrong in that. The facts are so obvious that I do not think anybody who really studies this debate can for a moment doubt them. We are not discussing in any effective sense the policy of the Government; we are discussing a motion for the adjournment of the House, and in that discussion various hon. gentlemen below the gangway opposite have been desirous of expressing their opinions. It is not a debate on the tremendous national issues presented to us earlier in the day, when the House of Commons in its strength was called together to hear an exposition of policy upon a question regarding which there has been no parallel in our lifetime and may be no parallel in the lifetime of the next generation. But what we have been listening to this evening has been the mere dregs and lees of debate, in no sense representing the various views of members of the House. Those hon. members who have spoken will not think, I hope, that I am attacking them individually, or suggesting for a moment that earnestness and sincerity were lacking in their speeches. All I say is that this is not a debate on the great question before the country, and that it does not represent what the House of Commons thinks on the subject. Under these circumstances,

and lest there may be chance of misconception at home and abroad, I would venture to very respectfully suggest that it should now come to an end. Let the House remember that the Prime Minister has promised a full opportunity for debating the policy of the Government. That will come on some money resolution or vote of credit. It is unfortunate and lamentable that we should spend the dregs of this evening not in proper House of Commons debate, not in dealing with a resolution on a great subject, but in a series of speeches which cannot be regarded as representing in any true sense the views of the party opposite. Therefore I appeal to hon. gentlemen to allow us to finish our proceedings to-night without dragging on this relatively impotent and feeble debate. Our present proceedings, which are not adding to our dignity, may possibly be misunderstood in the country, and will certainly be misunderstood abroad.

The House then adjourned, after some further Labour criticism. It was afterwards announced that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald had decided to resign his position as leader of the Labour Party, as he disagreed with his colleagues about the war. Lord Morley, Mr. John Burns, and Mr. C. P. Trevelyan, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, resigned for a similar reason. In the unusual circumstances, Field-Marshal Earl Kitchener was appointed War Minister on August 5th.

Italy declared her neutrality on August 3rd.

The following quotations from the White Paper carry the story to the final stages :

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Bertie.

Foreign Office,
August 2nd, 1914.

AFTER the Cabinet this morning I gave M. Cambon the following memorandum:

"I am authorised to give an assurance that, if the German Fleet comes into the Channel or through the North Sea to undertake hostile operations against French coasts or shipping, the British fleet will give all the protection in its power.

"This assurance is of course subject to the policy of His Majesty's Government receiving the support of Parliament, and must not be taken as binding His Majesty's Government to take any action until the above contingency of action by the German fleet takes place."

I pointed out that we had very large questions and most difficult issues to consider, and that Government felt that they could not bind themselves to declare war upon Germany necessarily if war broke out between France and Germany to-morrow, but it was essential to the French Government, whose fleet had long been concentrated in the Mediterranean, to know how to make their dispositions with their north coast entirely undefended. We therefore thought it necessary to give them this assurance. It did not bind us to go to war with Germany unless the German fleet took the action indicated, but it did give a security to France that would enable her to settle the disposition of her own Mediterranean fleet.

M. Cambon asked me about the violation of Luxemburg. I told him the doctrine on that point laid down by Lord Derby and Lord Clarendon in 1867. He asked me what we should say about the violation of the neutrality of Belgium. I said that was a much more important matter; we were considering

what statement we should make in Parliament to-morrow—in effect, whether we should declare violation of Belgian neutrality to be a *casus belli*. I told him what had been said to the German Ambassador on this point.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

Foreign Office,

August 4th, 1914.

THE King of the Belgians has made an appeal to His Majesty the King for diplomatic intervention on behalf of Belgium in the following terms:

"Remembering the numerous proofs of your Majesty's friendship and that of your predecessor, and the friendly attitude of England in 1870 and the proof of friendship you have just given us again, I make a supreme appeal to the diplomatic intervention of your Majesty's Government to safeguard the integrity of Belgium."

His Majesty's Government are also informed that the German Government has delivered to the Belgian Government a note proposing friendly neutrality entailing free passage through Belgian territory, and promising to maintain the independence and integrity of the kingdom and its possessions at the conclusion of peace, threatening in case of refusal to treat Belgium as an enemy. An answer was requested within twelve hours.

We also understand that Belgium has categorically refused this as a flagrant violation of the law of nations.

His Majesty's Government are bound to protest against this violation of a treaty to which Germany is a party in common with themselves, and must request an assurance that the demand made upon Belgium will not be proceeded with and that her

neutrality will be respected by Germany. You should ask for an immediate reply.

Sir F. Villiers to Sir Edward Grey.

Brussels,
August 4th, 1914.

GERMAN Minister has this morning addressed note to Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that as Belgian Government have declined the well-intentioned proposals submitted to them by Imperial Government, the latter will, deeply to their regret, be compelled to carry out, if necessary by force of arms, the measures considered indispensable in view of the French menaces.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir F. Villiers.

Foreign Office,
August 4th, 1914.

YOU should inform Belgian Government that if pressure is applied to them by Germany to induce them to depart from neutrality, His Majesty's Government expect that they will resist by any means in their power, and that His Majesty's Government will support them in offering such resistance, and that His Majesty's Government in this event are prepared to join Russia and France, if desired, in offering to the Belgian Government at once common action for the purpose of resisting use of force by Germany against them, and a guarantee to maintain their independence and integrity in future years.

German Foreign Secretary to Prince Lichnowsky.
(Communicated by German Embassy, August 4th.)

Berlin,
August 4th, 1914.

PLEASE dispel any mistrust that may subsist on the part of the British Government with regard to our intentions, by repeating most positively formal

assurance that, even in the case of armed conflict with Belgium, Germany will, under no pretence whatever, annex Belgian territory. Sincerity of this declaration is borne out by fact that we solemnly pledged our word to Holland strictly to respect her neutrality. It is obvious that we could not profitably annex Belgian territory without making at the same time territorial acquisitions at expense of Holland. Please impress upon Sir E. Grey that German army could not be exposed to French attack across Belgium, which was planned according to absolutely unimpeachable information. Germany had consequently to disregard Belgian neutrality, it being for her a question of life or death to prevent French advance.

Sir F. Villiers to Sir Edward Grey.

Brussels,

August 4th, 1914.

MILITARY attaché has been informed at War Office that German troops have entered Belgian territory, and that Liège has been summoned to surrender by small party of Germans who, however, were repulsed.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir E. Goschen.

Foreign Office,

August 4th, 1914.

WE hear that Germany has addressed note to Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that German Government will be compelled to carry out, if necessary by force of arms, the measures considered indispensable.

We are also informed that Belgian territory has been violated at Gemmenich.

In these circumstances, and in view of the fact that Germany declined to give the same assurance

respecting Belgium as France gave last week in reply to our request made simultaneously at Berlin and Paris, we must repeat that request, and ask that a satisfactory reply to it and to my telegram of this morning be received here by 12 o'clock to-night. If not, you are instructed to ask for your passports, and to say that His Majesty's Government feel bound to take all steps in their power to uphold the neutrality of Belgium and the observance of a treaty to which Germany is as much a party as ourselves.

The news of August 4th acts as a commentary on these despatches. On that evening war broke out, in fact if not in theory, between England and Germany, by the attack on a British squadron in the North Sea, and the sinking of a German mine-layer; but very soon afterwards it was known officially that Germany had declared war on this country by handing Sir E. Goschen his passports at seven o'clock. This was the answer of the Berlin Government to the last telegram quoted, demanding a reply by midnight. Relations between France and Germany had been broken off, on the German initiative, on Monday night.

On August 4th, Mr. Asquith read to the House of Commons the telegram from the German Foreign Secretary to Prince Lichnowsky, quoted above, and said:

I have to add this, on behalf of His Majesty's Government:

> We cannot regard this as in any sense a satisfactory communication. We have in reply to it repeated the request we made last week to the German Government that they should give

> us the same assurance in regard to Belgian neutrality as was given to us and to Belgium by France last week. We have asked that a reply to that request, and a satisfactory answer to the telegram of this morning which I have read to the House, shall be given before midnight.

Mr. Asquith then proceeded to the Bar, and there announced: "A message from His Majesty, signed by his own hand."

The right hon. gentleman then walked up the floor and handed a typewritten paper to the Clerk, who passed it on to the Speaker.

The Speaker read the document, which was as follows:

The present state of public affairs in Europe constituting in the opinion of His Majesty a case of great emergency within the meaning of the Acts of Parliament, His Majesty deems it proper to provide additional means for the military service and, therefore, in pursuance of those Acts, His Majesty has thought it right to communicate to the House of Commons that His Majesty is, by Proclamation, about to order that the Army Reserves be called out on permanent service.

That soldiers who would otherwise be entitled, in pursuance of the terms of their enlistment, to be transferred to the Reserves, shall continue in Army service for such period, not exceeding the period for which they might be required to serve if they were transferred to the Reserves and called out for permanent service, as to His Majesty may seem expedient.

And that such directions as may seem necessary may be given for embodying the Territorial Force, and for making such special arrangements as may be

proper with regard to units or individuals whose services may be required in other than a military capacity.

All the forces engaged in the struggle were now at work. Skirmishing had taken place on the Russo-German and Franco-German borders; and the attack on Liège, so gallantly withstood, had begun. Various proclamations were issued forbidding trading between England and Germany, calling upon reservists to report themselves, and so on. Mr. Asquith gave notice on August 5th that he would ask for a war credit of £100,000,000, an announcement which was received with loud cheers. Arrangements were made for extending the August Bank Holiday from Monday to Friday —the 3rd to the 7th—by which date the one pound notes were ready.

In an impressive speech on August 6th, Mr. Asquith outlined the attitude of the British Government as Sir Edward Grey had done on August 3rd. He laid special stress on the nature of the German "offer" regarding the French colonies, and on the gallant resistance of the Belgians, adding: "What would have been the position of Great Britain to-day in the face of that spectacle if we had assented to this infamous proposal?"

The following correspondence was also made public:

Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Buchanan.

Foreign Office,
August 1st, 1914, 3.30 *a.m.*

You should at once apply for an audience with His Majesty the Emperor, and convey to him the following personal message from the King:

"My Government has received the following statement from the German Government:

"'On July 29th, the Russian Emperor requested the German Emperor by telegraph to mediate between Russia and Austria. The Emperor immediately declared his readiness to do so. He informed the Russian Emperor of this by telegraph, and took the required action at Vienna. Without waiting for the result of this action Russia mobilised against Austria. By telegraph the German Emperor pointed out to the Russian Emperor that hereby his attempt at mediation would be rendered illusory. The Emperor further asked the Russian Emperor to suspend the military operations against Austria. This, however, did not happen. In spite of this the German Government continued their mediation in Vienna. In this matter the German Government had gone to the furthest limit of what can be suggested to a Sovereign State which is the ally of Germany.

"'The proposals made by the German Government in Vienna were conceived entirely on the lines suggested by Great Britain, and the German Government recommended them in Vienna for their serious consideration. They were taken into consideration in Vienna this morning. During the deliberations of the Cabinet, and before they were concluded, the German Ambassador in St. Petersburg reported the mobilisation of the entire Russian Army and Fleet. Owing to this action on the part of Russia, the Austrian answer to the German proposals for mediation, which were still under consideration, was not given. This action on the part of Russia is also directed against Germany, that is to say, the Power whose

mediation had been invoked by the Russian Emperor. We are bound to reply with serious counter-measures to this action, which we were obliged to consider as hostile, unless we were prepared to endanger the safety of our country. We are unable to remain inactive in face of the Russian mobilisation on our frontier. We have therefore informed Russia that, unless she were prepared to suspend within twelve hours the warlike measures against Germany and Austria we should be obliged to mobilise, and this would mean war. We have asked France if she would remain neutral during a German-Russian War.'

"I cannot help thinking that some misunderstanding has produced this deadlock. I am most anxious not to miss any possibility of avoiding the terrible calamity which at present threatens the whole world. I therefore make a personal appeal to you to remove the misapprehension which I feel must have occurred, and to leave still open grounds for negotiation and possible peace. If you think I can in any way contribute to that all-important purpose, I will do everything in my power to assist in reopening the interrupted conversations between the Powers concerned. I feel confident that you are as anxious as I am that all that is possible should be done to secure the peace of the world."

The reply of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia to His Majesty King George was:

I would gladly have accepted your proposals had not the German Ambassador this afternoon presented a note to my Government declaring war. Ever since presentation of the ultimatum at Belgrade, Russia has devoted all her efforts to finding some pacific solution of the question raised by Austria's action. The object

of that action was to crush Servia and make her a vassal of Austria. The effect of this would have been to upset the balance of power in the Balkans, which is of such vital interest to my Empire. Every proposal, including that of your Government, was rejected by Germany and Austria, and it was only when the favourable moment for bringing pressure to bear on Austria had passed that Germany showed any disposition to mediate. Even then she did not put forward any precise proposal.

Austria's declaration of war on Servia forced me to order a partial mobilisation, though, in view of the threatening situation, my military advisers strongly advised a general mobilisation owing to the quickness with which Germany can mobilise in comparison with Russia. I was eventually compelled to take this course in consequence of the complete Austrian mobilisation, of the bombardment of Belgrade, of the concentration of Austrian troops in Galicia, and of secret military preparations being made in Germany. That I was justified in doing so is proved by Germany's sudden declaration of war, which was quite unexpected by me, as I had given most categorical assurances to the Emperor William that my troops would not move so long as the mediation negotiations continued.

"In this solemn hour I wish to assure you once more that I have done all in my power to avert war. Now that it has been forced on me I trust your country will not fail to support France and Russia. God bless and protect you.

On August 12th, as Austrian troops were assisting the Germans, France felt herself compelled to break off diplomatic relations with Vienna; and, follow-

ing up this step, England formally declared war on Austria as from midnight, August 12th.

So ends the diplomatic story of the crisis—a crisis throughout which, as the extracts from the official correspondence will have shown, all the diplomatists concerned laboured hard in the cause of peace. The military measures taken by the great and the small nations engaged must be dealt with separately.

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